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ABSTRACT

This videotape and viewer's guide kit is designed for use in a teachers' study group that is part of a comprehensive professional development plan. It encourages teachers to critique and inquire about standards and standards-based teaching in their diverse schools and classrooms. The kit was designed based on a 3-year project in which researchers and educators explored issues related to implementing standards with English language Learners. The 48-minute VHS videotape includes "Teachers' Views" (which focuses on standards-based teaching and learning) and "Professional Development" (which illustrates a professional development approach that supports teachers as they implement standards with English language learners). Each part of the video is designed to stand alone. The viewers' guide provides resources and suggestions for using the video in professional development settings. Its five sections include the following: "Introduction"; "How To Use the Video and the Viewers' Guide"; "Discussion Questions for the Video"; "Sample Outline for Study Group Sessions"; and "Supplementary Materials for Using the Video" (unit and lesson plans, professional development strategies and tools, video transcript, guidelines for starting a study group, teachers' reflections on changes in practice, and resources for further study). (Contains 12 references.) (SM)

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# STANDARDS-BASED TEACHING IN CULTURALLY DIVERSE SCHOOLS

# VIEWERS' GUIDE

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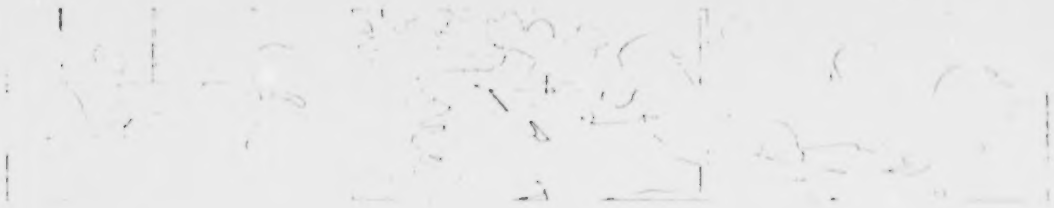

# STANDARDS-BASED TEACHING IN CULTURALLY DIVERSE SCHOOLS

Nancy Clair and Carolyn Temple Adger

LAB

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**a program of The Education Alliance at Brown University**

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# I. INTRODUCTION

Now that many states and school districts have developed standards and curriculum frameworks, teachers are challenged to help all of their students reach these new learning goals.[1] Meeting this challenge is likely to call for changes in classroom practice, problem solving, and professional development. *Standards-Based Teaching in Culturally Diverse Schools* is a multimedia resource for teachers, supervisors, principals, administrators, staff developers, and policymakers concerned with implementing standards in culturally diverse schools and districts.

With a focus on teachers' perspectives, the video and viewers' guide explore approaches to standards-based teaching and learning and illustrate strategies for long-term, collaborative professional development. This resource presents three sustainable strategies—analyzing standards, examining student work, and discussing professional literature—that can be used to maintain collaborative professional development. While it will be particularly useful to those concerned with educating English language learners (ELLs), this resource will benefit all teachers—from content-area to English as a second language (ESL) to bilingual teachers—in any school seeking ways to incorporate standards more effectively.

This video and viewers' guide are designed for use in a teachers' study group that is part of a comprehensive, coherent professional development plan. The approach of this resource is consistent with recent research showing that professional development is most likely to support change in teaching when it is linked to teachers' professional experiences, aligned with school and district reform efforts, and characterized by communication among teachers (Garet, Porter, Desimone, Birman, & Yoon, 2001). The video and guide encourage teachers to critique and inquire about standards and standards-based teaching in their schools and classrooms (Lieberman & Miller, 2001). Study groups can use the video, suggested discussion topics, session outlines, and supplementary materials in this guide to raise questions about standards implementation in their own schools and to stimulate discussion and reflection on appropriate teaching practices.

[1] For information on standards, see Resources for Further Study.

*Standards-Based Teaching in Culturally Diverse Schools* grew out of several years of applied research on professional development for standards implementation in Lowell, Massachusetts. The research design was based on previous research on professional development (e.g., Renyi, 1996); and the professional development approach emphasized research on second language acquisition (e.g., Pica, 1987) and instruction for English language learners (e.g., Garcia, 1991). Three key assumptions contributed to the project design:

1. Long-term, collaborative professional development is central to implementing content standards with English language learners.
2. To address standards, content-area teachers may need to learn more about second language acquisition and effective education for English language learners, and ESL and bilingual teachers may need to learn more about the mainstream curriculum.
3. Combining content-area teachers, ESL teachers, and teachers in bilingual programs will make complementary knowledge and perspectives available to everyone.

During this 3-year project, several researchers and more than 100 educators worked together to explore issues in implementing standards with English language learners. In the first year, English language arts, ESL, and bilingual program teachers from four middle schools met with the researchers in two cohorts for monthly full-day sessions. The next year, teachers and researchers met each month for 2 hours at the four schools. In the final year, the cross-school study group shown in the video convened twice each month in 2-hour sessions. Throughout the project, the group addressed questions about standards-based teaching and gained knowledge about educating ELLs using professional development strategies such as those shown in the video. The video shows study group members in their classrooms and in study group discussions during the final year of the project.

### Standards-Based Teaching in Culturally Diverse Schools: Video

This 48-minute video is divided into two parts:

- ***Part One:*** *Teachers' Views* focuses on standards-based teaching and learning.
- ***Part Two:*** *Professional Development* illustrates a professional development approach that supports teachers as they implement standards with English language learners.

Each part of the video is designed to stand alone. Viewing both parts allows the audience to see the full complexity of raising standards in culturally diverse schools.

### Video Part 1: Teachers' Views

This 26-minute video shows teachers discussing the challenges of implementing standards and teaching standards-based lessons in four middle school classrooms with English language learners. The video responds to the following questions:

a) What do standards mean for teaching and learning?
b) What does standards-based teaching and learning look like?
c) How do teachers know that students are progressing toward the standards?

### Video Part 2: Professional Development

This 22-minute video presents a professional development approach and sustainable strategies to support teachers who are responsible for standards-based teaching and learning, with special attention to English language learners. It shows middle school teachers working together in groups to analyze standards in detail, examine student work and explore its implications for instruction, and interpret educational research in light of their practice. It raises the following questions:

a) How can teachers get better at what they do?
b) What are the principles and strategies of a professional development approach for implementing standards?
c) What are the challenges and possibilities for creating professional development that supports teachers?

**Standards-Based Teaching in Culturally Diverse Schools: Viewers' Guide**

This viewers' guide provides resources and suggestions for using the video in professional development settings. Section II describes how facilitators can use this multimedia resource. At the core of the guide are section III, discussion questions addressing major topics in the video, and section IV, sample outlines for using this resource in 2-hour study group sessions. Section V provides supplementary material for using the video and extending the group's learning over time. The lesson and unit plans that appear there pertain to the lessons featured in the video and include the standards that the teachers were addressing. Descriptions of the professional development strategies and tools provide details for the study group activities shown in the video. The transcript of the video can be useful when planning and reviewing sessions. The guidelines for starting a study group may be helpful to those who want to structure professional development so that it is relevant to teachers' concerns. Reflective essays by four teachers describe changes in their practice as a result of participation in the project. Resources for Further Study lists more materials relevant to major topics that a study group might want to pursue. A glossary defines key terms.

# II. HOW TO USE THE VIDEO AND THE VIEWERS' GUIDE

The video and viewers' guide are designed for use in study groups that meet regularly to examine issues relevant to improving schools and to build knowledge together. Although using the video in isolated sessions may create awareness of the complexities and possibilities of standards implementation with English language learners, this approach will not give teachers the resources and support they need to change their classroom practice. Likewise, showing the video without referring to the print materials will deprive the viewers of contextualizing information that can help them connect new ideas with their existing knowledge and experience. Using this resource in the context of long-term collaborative professional development, well-informed by research, will enable participants to draw on the knowledge that they have already built together and to shape their learning in the future.

Study groups tend to function democratically. Sessions can be led by study group members who are skilled facilitators, district professional developers, or outside consultants. Facilitation may be alternated among study group members. Facilitators will find ideas for planning sessions in the suggested discussion questions (section III) and the sample outlines for 2-hour sessions (section IV). They should adapt these materials based on the group's size and participants' experience with standards implementation and English language learners.

# III. DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR THE VIDEO

The following questions are designed to stimulate discussion in study groups. Facilitators should select those that seem most valuable for the group. Page numbers following the questions refer to the video transcript in section V.

## VIDEO Part 1

In *Standards-Based Teaching in Culturally Diverse Schools: Teachers' Views*, you will see classroom footage that demonstrates standards-based teaching and learning in four middle school classrooms. In addition, you will hear teachers discussing their practice and raising issues relevant to the possibilities and complexities of standards-based teaching and learning in culturally diverse schools.

### Pre-view

1. What do you expect to see in terms of teacher behavior, student interaction, classroom climate, language of instruction, language of student participation, content, and other dimensions of classroom life?

2. There are those who claim that standards-based teaching and learning will result in standardized teaching practices. Do you think that you will see standardized classroom practices? Explain.

3. What issues do you predict that teachers will mention? What are your experiences with some of these issues?

## The Video

4. Eileen Skovholt asks the group if their work with standards has had an impact on how they relate to their students. How do the teachers respond? Do you agree with them? How would you answer Eileen's question based on your experience with standards? (p. 77)

5. Cheryl Boss says that she has become familiar with the standards but she has "no intention of going through a list and trying to cover every standard." Is it possible or desirable for one teacher to "cover" every standard? Is that the intent of standards? In what ways can teachers address the problem of too many standards in a given content area? (p. 78)

6. The narrator says that standards implementation calls for interpretation. If you agree with this statement, explain why teachers need to interpret the standards. If you disagree, explain your position. What do teachers need to know in order to plan standards-based units and lessons that are appropriate for English language learners? What has been your experience in designing, implementing, and assessing standards-based units and lessons that are appropriate for English language learners? (p. 78)

## Deborah Romeo's Class

7. Deborah Romeo addresses a number of social studies and English language arts standards in her unit on the Constitution. What benefits does this have for the students in general and for English language learners in particular? (p. 79)

8. In reflecting on how two of her students work together, Deborah Romeo asserts that students have the power to teach one another. Do you agree? What has been your experience with students teaching each other? What is the connection between standards-based teaching and students teaching each other? (pp. 79-80)

9. Deborah Romeo talks about her wish for all students to use more academic language. What is academic language? What challenges does it present for English language learners? How does Romeo structure and support the use of academic language in her classroom? How do you support academic language use in your classroom? Why is Romeo concerned about knowing her students' dominant languages? How do academic language and language choice relate to standards implementation? (p. 80)

## Cheryl Boss's Class

**10.** Cheryl Boss wants her students to "discover" a newspaper. What does she mean? Why is discovery useful for all students, including English language learners? How is discovery connected to the implementation of standards? (p. 81)

**11.** Why does Cheryl Boss insist that all students write on the newspaper project? Do you agree?

**12.** Cheryl Boss plans thematic units with other teachers in her grade-level team. Why are thematic units particularly effective with English language learners? What successes and challenges have you experienced with designing, implementing, and assessing thematic units? How can the various subject-area standards be addressed in planning thematic units? (p. 81)

## Jolane Roy's Class

**13.** What is scaffolding instruction? Why is scaffolding important for English language learners in the context of standards? How does Jolane Roy scaffold instruction for her English language learners? How do you scaffold instruction for your students? (p. 83)

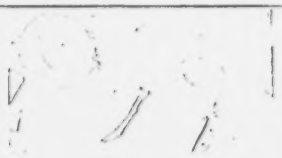
**14.** Why does Jolane Roy encourage students to use their native languages? What is the role of native language in learning academic content? What is the role of native language in your classroom? (pp. 83-84)

**15.** Reflecting on her lesson, Jolane Roy concluded that she had "to back up before we were able to move forward." On what basis might she have made that decision? How do you decide whether students are ready to move on from a lesson (in other words, how do you know that they have learned what you have taught)? (p. 84)

## Steve Cyr's Class

**16.** Why does Steve Cyr use the "question du jour"? What does he expect to learn about students by using this technique? Have you used a similar assessment strategy? What have your experiences been? (pp. 84-85)

## Study Group



**17.** Cheryl Boss says that the "assessment piece always leaves me mystified." She questions how she knows what her students know. How would you respond to her? Why is classroom-based assessment so challenging for teachers? How do you assess students in your classroom? (p. 85)

**18.** Eileen Skovholt talks about the power of assessment for English language learners. What does she mean? What successes and challenges have you had with classroom-based assessment of English language learners? (p. 85)

## Post-view

**19.** Go back to your predictions about teacher behavior, student interaction, classroom climate, language of instruction, language of student learning, and content. Which predictions were affirmed in the video? Which were challenged?

**20.** Does the video challenge the assertion that standards-based teaching results in standardized classroom practice? Explain.

**21.** Go back to your predictions about the issues regarding standards-based teaching and learning in culturally diverse schools. Did your predictions match those that the teachers raised? Which issues are most important for you and your school?

**22.** As a result of watching the video, what new questions do you have about standards-based teaching and learning in culturally diverse schools?

**23.** What next steps do you need to take in order to improve standards-based teaching in your school?

## VIDEO Part 2

In *Standards-Based Teaching in Culturally Diverse Schools: Professional Development*, you will see teachers working together in a study group that met twice a month for a year. The study group is part of a long-term professional development approach aimed at supporting teachers as they grapple with standards implementation in culturally diverse schools. The teachers use three sustainable professional development strategies to focus on various standards and reflect on their teaching—sustainable in the sense that they can and should be used repeatedly to enrich teachers' conversations and enhance professional growth.

# Pre-view

**24.** What kinds of professional development experiences have you had that focus on standards implementation and/or the education of English language learners? How would you describe those experiences?

**25.** In the video, you will see teachers working together in a study group. What is your experience with study groups? In what ways are study groups different from skills-based workshops?

**26.** What are the benefits and challenges of providing and participating in long-term teacher professional development? Why does standards implementation with English language learners call for long-term professional development experiences?

# The Video

**27.** In the video, the narrator says, "Standards have the potential to help culturally diverse schools serve all of their students well." Why does the narrator use the word *potential*? What are the prerequisites for successful implementation of standards for all students in a school? If your school is already implementing standards, how would you assess your school's capacity for standards-based teaching? If not, how would you assess your school's readiness to implement standards? (p. 87)

**28.** Nancy Meehan talks about the problems associated with consultant-provided professional development and describes a new approach that she believes will work. Do you agree? (p. 87)

**29.** The narrator introduces three sustainable strategies: analyzing standards, examining student work, and discussing professional literature. What experiences have you had with these strategies? What other sustainable professional development strategies have you used? What makes a strategy sustainable and productive over time? (p. 87)

## Analyzing Standards

***Analyzing standards:*** *Standards are conceptually dense. The standards analysis tool provides a framework for unpacking the standards so that teachers can plan for instruction. The conversation that occurs as a result of using the tool illuminates teachers' strengths and knowledge gaps.*

**30.** Why is analyzing standards hard work? What does the narrator mean when he says, "Standards analysis involves interpretation and negotiation"? (p. 87)

**31.** Cheryl Athanas raises doubts about the standards analysis process. What are her doubts? (p. 88)

**32.** Marney Stoumbelis says, "It's hard not to make assumptions, too, about what the kids already know." Why is it hard? How do you assess students' prior knowledge? (p. 88)

**33.** What issues do the teachers raise as a result of analyzing standards? Which of these issues are relevant for you and your school? How do you confront them? (pp. 88-89)

## Examining Student Work

***Examining student work:*** *This strategy provides a framework for examining student work in a nonjudgmental, structured way. It focuses discussion on teaching and learning and allows teachers to search for evidence of standards implementation.*

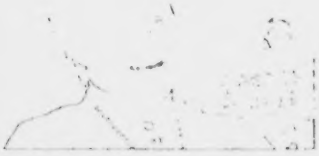
**34.** What experiences have you had with examining student work without evaluating it? What are the benefits and challenges of looking closely at student work in collaboration with your peers?

**35.** The video shows excerpts from the first four steps of the student work protocol—description, questioning, speculation, and comments from the presenting teacher. What is the purpose of these steps? What is the value of withholding information about the context in which the work was done (e.g., the author, the assignment)? What is the benefit of having the presenting teacher listen to comments about the work before he or she speaks? (pp. 89-91)

**36.** Does Cheryl Boss (the presenting teacher) say anything surprising about her student's work? (p. 91) (The student work being discussed appears on pages 67-74.)

## Discussing Professional Literature

***Discussing professional literature:*** *Reading together helps teachers build knowledge and discourages them from perpetuating myths about teaching culturally diverse students and about education reform.*



**37.** What experiences have you had reading and discussing professional literature with colleagues? What are the benefits and challenges of reading together?

**38.** Deborah Romeo says, "Teaching should begin with a focus on where teaching is applied rather than on the teachers' intentions?" What does she mean? Do you agree? (p. 91)

**39.** Marney Stoumbelis talks about two impulses in educational reform—one that focuses on tighter controls and another that focuses on building teacher/school capacity. Are these two views of reform incompatible? Which view describes your beliefs? Which view predominates in your school or district? (p. 92)

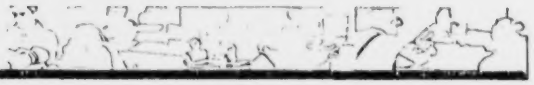
**40.** Marney Stoumbelis suggests that the study group exemplifies the impulse to build teacher and school capacity. She says trust is necessary to do this. Why is trust an important attribute of study groups? Do you see evidence that these teachers trust each other? How do teachers build trust and professional relationships in order to improve their practice? (p. 92)

## Supporting Professional Development

**41.** Eileen Skovholt expresses her concerns about the accountability movement and asks how administrators can be persuaded to support teacher study groups as a viable professional development option. Are her concerns relevant to your school and district? Why is administrative support essential? Are there barriers to attaining support for teachers' professional growth in your school and district? (p. 92)

**42.** Nancy Clair refers to the findings from the first year of project research. She says that there were initial misconceptions about the ESL, bilingual, and content-area teachers' responsibilities. One result of working together in the study group was a deeper understanding of each other's roles and more collaboration across programs. What are other benefits and challenges of bringing these teachers together in long-term professional development settings? What is your experience with professional development that includes ESL, bilingual, and content-area teachers? (p. 93)

**43.** Cheryl Boss says, "The only way any of us can become better teachers is to get comfortable with a challenge being a positive thing." Do you agree? (p. 94)



## Post-view

**44.** What did you notice about study group facilitation and participation?

**45.** What are the essential characteristics of study groups? What are the benefits and challenges of study groups?

**46.** If your school doesn't have study groups, how would you start one? What decisions would you have to make? What resources would you need? With whom would you collaborate? What would need to happen to keep the group going?

**47.** If you were to start a study group, which of the sustainable strategies would you use first? Why? What other sustainable strategies might you use?

**48.** In the pre-view questions, you were asked about the differences between study groups and skill-based workshops. Would you revise or add anything to your original response?

**49.** In the pre-view questions, you were asked why standards implementation with English language learners calls for long-term professional development experiences. Would you revise or add anything to your original response?

**50.** What new questions or observations do you have about standards, English language learners, and professional development?

# IV. SAMPLE OUTLINES FOR STUDY GROUP SESSIONS

There are two sample outlines for each part of the video. These outlines are intended as suggestions, not protocols to be followed. Facilitators should select those that match their professional development goals and adapt them to the needs of the group. For each part of the video, there is one outline for viewing and discussing the video in its entirety and one for critiquing a video clip of import to the group.

## OUTLINE 1
## VIDEO PART 1: TEACHERS' VIEWS

### DURATION

- Two-hour study group session

### OBJECTIVES

- Exchange experiences about standards-based teaching and learning
- Raise questions for further study about standards implementation with English language learners

## PRE-VIEW (15 min.)

- ☐ Begin the session by telling group members that they will see footage of standards-based teaching and learning in culturally diverse classrooms.

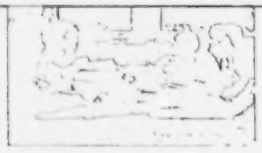
- ☐ Give the group background information about *Video Part 1: Teachers' Views*. (Part 1 shows study group meetings and classroom footage. The study group met twice a month for a year to explore standards implementation with English language learners. Some of the study group members had already worked with colleagues for 2 years on standards implementation. The study group members are content-area, ESL, and bilingual education teachers from four highly diverse middle schools in Lowell, Massachusetts. For a fuller account of the project, see section V, A Project History, p. 97.)

- ☐ Ask group members what they expect to see in these classrooms in terms of teacher behavior, student interaction, classroom climate, language of instruction, language of student response, and content. (See pre-view question #1, section III.)

- ☐ Ask group members to do a free-writing exercise about their expectations. (See pre-view questions #1-3, section III.)

- ☐ Have group members share their responses in groups of two or three.

## THE VIDEO: PART 1 (30 min.)



- ☐ Show the video Part 1. Ask group members to watch for the characteristics that they expect to see in each of the classroom clips.

## POST-VIEW ACTIVITY (20 min.)

- ☐ Ask group members to do another free-writing exercise responding to the following questions: Which of their expectations were affirmed? What was surprising?

- ☐ In the large group, discuss responses.

## POST-VIEW GROUP DISCUSSION (45 min.)

- ☐ Divide the group into four small groups. Ask each group to focus on a designated teacher—Deborah, Cheryl, Jolane, or Steve—and address the discussion questions for that teacher (see section III). Group members assigned to discuss Steve Cyr's class may want to discuss the post-view questions, too.

- ☐ Have each group report on one insight and one question from their group discussion. As facilitator, record the insights and questions on flip chart paper.

- ☐ Lead the group in responding to questions. If necessary, view the classroom footage again and consult the transcript in section V.

## FOLLOW-UP: SUGGESTIONS FOR THE NEXT STUDY GROUP MEETING (10 min.)

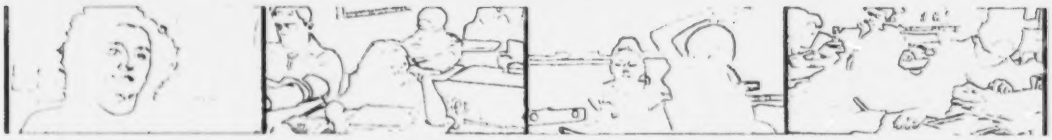
- ☐ Decide as a group what activities will follow for the next study group meeting. If appropriate, ask study group members to volunteer to facilitate.

- ☐ Based on the issues and questions that emerge from discussion, the study group may want to refer to the list of readings in section V. Study group members can select a reading to discuss during the next study group meeting.

- ☐ Study group members may want to watch the entire video or portions of the video again. They may want to respond to the remaining discussion questions.

- ☐ Study group members may want to watch the classroom footage again. In preparation for this, they may want to examine the unit and lesson plans in section V. (If you decide to use outline 2, have group members bring a standards-based unit and lesson plan to the next study group session.)

# OUTLINE 2
# VIDEO Part 1: Teachers' Views



## DURATION

- ☐ **Two-hour study group session**

## OBJECTIVES

- ☐ **Examine standards-based unit and lesson plans**
- ☐ **Devise criteria for evaluating standards-based unit and lesson plans that are appropriate for English language learners**
- ☐ **Plan for the development or revision of a standards-based unit and/or lesson plan**

## PRE-VIEW (50 min.)

- ☐ Review the background information for *Video Part 1: Teachers' Views*. (Part 1 shows study group meetings and classroom footage. The study group met twice a month for a year to explore standards implementation with English language learners. Some of the study group members had already worked with colleagues for 2 years on standards implementation. The study group members are content-area, ESL, and bilingual education teachers from four highly diverse middle schools in Lowell, Massachusetts. For a fuller account of the project, see section V, A Project History, p. 97.)
- ☐ Tell group members that in this session you will focus on one classroom in order to examine the standards-based unit and lesson.
- ☐ Ask group members about their experiences with designing, implementing, and evaluating standards-based units and lessons. Probe for successes and challenges. If teachers mention barriers, ask how they dealt with them.

- ☐ Refer group members to Deborah Romeo's unit and lesson plan in section V.

- ☐ Have the group count off by fours. Groups 1 and 2 will focus on the unit plan. Groups 3 and 4 will focus on the lesson plan.

- ☐ Ask groups 1 and 2 to review the unit plan and respond to the following:
  *(You may want to put these questions on chart paper.)*
  - What are the elements of the unit plan?
  - In what ways does the unit plan account for the specific needs of English language learners?
  - What questions does the unit plan raise for you?

- ☐ Ask groups 3 and 4 to review the lesson plan and respond to the following:
  - What are the elements of the lesson plan?
  - In what ways does the lesson plan account for the particular needs of English language learners?
  - What questions does the lesson plan raise for you?

- ☐ Ask groups 1 and 3, and 2 and 4, to join together. Have group members review responses to the questions.

- ☐ In the large group, chart group members' questions about the unit and the lesson plans.

## THE VIDEO CLIP: DEBORAH ROMEO'S CLASS (10 min.)

- ☐ Show the video clip on Deborah Romeo's class. (You may wish to refer to transcript pages 78-80.) Ask group members to watch for responses to the questions generated in the pre-view activity (if applicable) or ways in which instruction is appropriate for English language learners.

## POST-VIEW GROUP DISCUSSION (50 min.)

- ☐ Ask the group about their impressions of the footage in relation to the unit and lesson plan. If appropriate, discuss questions that were generated about the unit and lesson plan.
- ☐ (Optional) Review discussion questions #7-9, section III.
- ☐ In the large group, generate criteria for evaluating standards-based units and lessons that are appropriate for English language learners. An example criterion might be this: Standards-based units and lessons should refer to the school district content standards.
- ☐ Ask the group how they would like to plan for developing their own standards-based units and lessons. They can develop units individually, in pairs, or in groups. They can revise existing units and lesson plans using the newly generated evaluation criteria.
- ☐ Decide when the unit and lesson plans should be finished. Group members may decide to bring them to the next study group meeting.

## FOLLOW-UP: SUGGESTIONS FOR THE NEXT STUDY GROUP MEETING (10 min.)

- ☐ Decide as a group what activities will follow for the next study group meeting. If appropriate, ask study group members to volunteer to facilitate.
- ☐ Study group members can bring revised or new standards-based unit and lesson plans to the next session, with copies for other group members. In small groups, group members can use the evaluation criteria to review the unit and lesson plans. Group members may want to revise the evaluation criteria.
- ☐ Study group members can try out the standards-based lessons that they developed and write reflections in a journal. At the next study group meeting, members can report on their reflections or new questions.
- ☐ Study group members may want to repeat the process in outline *2* for the remaining classroom footage. Group members can use the evaluation criteria with Cheryl Boss's, Jolane Roy's, and Steve Cyr's standards-based unit and lesson plans.
- ☐ Study group members may want to read one of the items in the reading list or suggest that the group read something else to prepare for the next session.

# OUTLINE 3
## VIDEO Part 2: Professional Development

## DURATION

- Two-hour study group session

## OBJECTIVES

- Reflect on professional development opportunities to date and plan for future professional development experiences
- Gain awareness of three professional development strategies for teachers who are implementing standards with English language learners

## PRE-VIEW (15 min.)

- Begin the session by telling group members that they will see a video that highlights teachers using sustainable learning strategies as a way to improve their practice.
- Give the group some background information about the study group in the *Video Part 2: Professional Development*. (The study group met twice a month for a year to explore standards implementation with English language learners. They used three sustainable professional development strategies that are connected to improving classroom practice for English language learners. The study group members are content-area, ESL, and bilingual education teachers from four highly diverse middle schools in Lowell, Massachusetts. For a fuller account of the project, see section V, A Project History, p. 97.)
- Ask the group to think about the professional development experiences they have had in the past year. Have group members make lists.

- ☐ In pairs, have group members compare their lists.
- ☐ Ask group members what observations they have about the lists. Ask them to identify benefits and problems associated with the types of professional development experiences they have had to date.

## THE VIDEO: PART 2 (30 min.)

- ☐ Show the video Part 2. Tell group members that they will be discussing the sustainable strategies after viewing the video.

## POST-VIEW DISCUSSION: SMALL GROUP WORK (45 min.)

- ☐ Divide the group into three smaller groups. Ask each group to focus on one sustainable strategy—analyzing standards, examining student work, or discussing professional literature. Ask each group to address the suggested questions for each strategy. (See discussion questions #34-40, section III.)
- ☐ Give each group two pieces of chart paper. Have the group label one piece of chart paper "benefits" and the other "challenges." Have the group make a collective list of the benefits and challenges of the strategy they are working on.
- ☐ Have the groups hang their lists around the room. Group members should circulate and read each others' lists.

## POST-VIEW DISCUSSION: LARGE GROUP WORK (25 min.)

- ☐ In the large group, ask group members for insights and questions from reading the lists.
- ☐ Facilitate a group discussion addressing the following questions:
  - In what ways is the study group different from the professional development experiences that you listed in the pre-view exercise?
  - What are the essential characteristics of study groups? What are the benefits and challenges of study groups? (See discussion question #45, section III.)
  - How would you go about starting a study group in your school? What decisions would you have to consider? What resources would you consult? (See discussion question #46, section III.)
  - If you were to start a study group, which of the sustainable strategies would you practice first? Why? What resources would you consult? (See discussion question #47, section III.)

## FOLLOW-UP: SUGGESTIONS FOR THE NEXT STUDY GROUP MEETING (5 min.)

- ☐ Decide as a group what activities will follow for the next study group meeting. If appropriate, ask study group members to volunteer to facilitate.
- ☐ Based on the issues and questions that emerge from discussion, the study group may want to refer to the readings in section V. The group may want to read the teachers' reflective essays in section V, since they highlight teachers' experiences with professional development.
- ☐ Study group members may want to watch the entire video or portions of the video again. They may want to respond to any remaining discussion questions.
- ☐ Study group members may want to watch the footage of the sustainable strategies again. In preparation for this, they may want to examine the protocols in section V.
- ☐ In the next study group meeting, the group may want to try the strategy that they felt would be the most appropriate. (See outline 4.)

# OUTLINE 4
# VIDEO Part 2: Professional Development

## DURATION

- ☐ **Two-hour study group session**

## OBJECTIVES

- ☐ **Examine a sustainable professional development strategy: analyzing standards**
- ☐ **Practice analyzing standards with a district or state content standard**
- ☐ **Make plans to continue using the analyzing standards tool**

## PRE-VIEW (20 min.)

- ☐ Begin the session by telling group members that they will focus on one of the sustainable professional development strategies: analyzing standards.
- ☐ If group members have already viewed the video, ask them what they remember about this strategy. Probe for the purpose of using the tool.
- ☐ Refer to the standards analysis tool in section V of the guide. Walk through the components of the tool with the group. Tell the group that analyzing standards is the first step toward developing standards-based units and lessons. It focuses on content rather than on what students can or cannot do. Ask the group for questions or comments.
- ☐ Review the background information for *Video Part 2: Professional Development*. (The study group met twice a month for a year to explore standards implementation with English language learners. They used three sustainable professional development strategies that are connected to improving classroom practice for English language learners. The study group

members are content-area, ESL, and bilingual education teachers from four highly diverse middle schools in Lowell, Massachusetts. For a fuller account of the project, see section V, A Project History, p. 97.)

## THE VIDEO CLIP: ANALYZING STANDARDS (15 min.)

- ☐ Show the video clip of teachers working on standards analysis. (You may wish to refer to transcript pages 87-89.) Tell the group that the teachers have already worked through the components of the tool. As the group watches the clip, ask them to listen to the quality of the conversation among the teachers.

## POST-VIEW GROUP DISCUSSION (20 min.)

- ☐ Ask the group to take 5 minutes to write reactions and observations about the quality of conversation among the teachers.
- ☐ Ask the group to discuss their reactions in pairs.
- ☐ In the large group, ask for insights, reactions, and questions.
- ☐ (Optional) Have group members address the discussion questions #34-36, section III. This will take a minimum of 30 minutes.

## POST-VIEW ACTIVITY (60 min.)

- ☐ Select a content standard in advance. Tell the group that you will practice using the standards analysis tool together. Use an overhead or chart paper for display.
- ☐ Before starting, ask two people in the group to be observers. Ask them to take notes on the conversation, noting disagreement, negotiation, and questions.
- ☐ Working with the standard you selected, lead the group in analysis of the standard in terms of each of the components listed on the tool. Remind the group that this is a brainstorming

process whose purpose is to analyze the content of the standard, not what students can or cannot do. Write all ideas on the overhead or flip chart.

- ☐ When the group has nothing more to add to the analysis, facilitate a discussion about the process. Ask participants (not observers) to comment. Then ask for comments from the observers. You may want to include the following questions in the group discussion:
  - What components listed on the tool are difficult to identify?
  - In what ways did the tool help you identify subject matter expertise?
  - What are the gaps in your own knowledge?
  - What will you do about those gaps?

- ☐ After briefly summarizing the group discussion, you may want to make a few comments about the standards analysis tool. Remind the group that analyzing standards is hard work and that negotiation is an important part of the process. Remind the group that the tool may reveal gaps in their own content knowledge. Tell the group that the tool allows teachers to focus on content, not students. Remind them that the tool is the first step in creating standards-based units and lessons.

- ☐ Ask the group how they will use the tool in the future. Suggest different group configurations, such as grade-level teams, ESL and bilingual program teachers, and so forth, that might use the tool productively. Discuss pros and cons, and make decisions for using the standards analysis tool.

## FOLLOW-UP: SUGGESTIONS FOR THE NEXT STUDY GROUP MEETING (5 min.)

- ☐ Decide as a group what activities will follow for the next study group meeting. If appropriate, ask study group members to volunteer to facilitate.

- ☐ If study group members decide to practice using the standards analysis tool between sessions, they can discuss the result during the next meeting.

- ☐ Study group members may want to practice using the standards analysis tool in triads and compare results with other triads. The next step would be designing standards-based units and lessons.

- ☐ After sufficient practice with the standards analysis tool, study group members may want to focus on using the remaining sustainable strategies shown in this video as well as others. See the Resources for Further Study, section V, for more information.

# V. SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS

This section provides additional information and resources relating to content covered in the video. These materials include unit and lesson plans, professional development strategies and tools, the video transcript, guidelines for starting a study group, four essays by teachers describing changes in their practice, and resources for study groups.

## UNIT AND LESSON PLANS

The classroom scenes in the video come from standards-based lessons. Plans for those lessons and the units in which they are nested appear here.

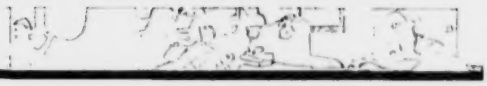
Deborah Romeo
Social Studies & English
Grade 8
Unit: Compromise and the Constitution

### UNIT PLAN

#### Standard(s)/Descriptors

From the History and Social Studies Curriculum Guide, Grades 5-8, Lowell Public Schools, Lowell, Massachusetts:

- ☐ Students will describe how ideals expressed in key documents relate to the powers of state, national, and local governments. Students will understand rights of the individual provided in the Bill of Rights.
- ☐ Students will identify authors and key figures in drafting and ratifying the U.S. Constitution, including the circumstances in which it was written and the basic content of the document. Students will explain the meaning of the Preamble.



From the English Language Arts Curriculum Guide, Grades 5-8, Lowell Public Schools, Lowell, Massachusetts:

- ☐ Students will use agreed-upon rules for informal and formal discussion in small groups and large groups.
- ☐ Students will apply their knowledge of nonfiction material.
- ☐ Students will learn to write compositions with a clear focus, developing the composition with logically related ideas and adequate supporting detail.

## Content and Language Concepts and Skills

### Content:

- ☐ Students will learn about one delegate and the colony/state that he represented.
- ☐ Students will learn the major issues, opposing positions, and compromises in the Constitutional Convention.
- ☐ Students will learn the principles behind the Constitution: federalism, separation of powers, and checks and balances.
- ☐ Students will understand the struggle for ratification.
- ☐ Students will learn about the origin and the contents of the Bill of Rights.

### Language Concepts and Skills:

- ☐ Students will learn to rephrase what the previous speaker has said as a skill to be used in classroom debates.
- ☐ Students will write expository paragraphs that explain opposing positions.
- ☐ Students will generate notes after classroom discussion that summarize key points.
- ☐ Students will use transitional words of contrast.
- ☐ Students will learn to write an introduction and conclusion for an expository essay.
- ☐ Students will paraphrase and take notes from nonfiction texts.
- ☐ Students will create an argumentative role play.

## Activities

- ☐ Research role for enacting Constitutional Convention (Internet)
- ☐ Practice debate: Should the school year be lengthened?
- ☐ Conduct mock Constitutional Convention, followed by note taking and research on compromise
- ☐ Teach strategies for writing introductions and conclusions
- ☐ Brainstorm ideas for introductions
- ☐ Contrast Articles of Confederation and Constitution
- ☐ Write dialogue between a Federalist and Anti-Federalist discussing ratification
- ☐ Paraphrase Bill of Rights
- ☐ Explore contemporary application of Bill of Rights

## Materials/Resources

- ☐ "Who Are You?" introduction and question sheet
- ☐ 1790 census (to be used in making population graphs)
- ☐ Rubrics: Parts 1 and 2 of the essay assignment
- ☐ Paragraph template
- ☐ Various sample introductions and conclusions
- ☐ Role-playing preparation sheet
- ☐ Bill of Rights (primary source)
- ☐ Various primary source readings (letters from the Convention)
- ☐ Various secondary source readings and activities on federalism, separation of powers, and checks and balances

## Assessment

- ☐ Research: Collect materials students completed to prepare for Constitutional Convention (population graph, question sheet, and biographical info summary)
- ☐ Writing: Five-paragraph expository essay explaining issues, perspectives, and compromises in the Constitutional Convention
- ☐ Test on the principles on which the Constitution was based (federalism, separation of powers, and branches of government)

## NOTES

**What makes this lesson a standards-based lesson?**

This lesson is taken from an 8-week unit on Compromise and the Constitution. The entire unit is designed around several social studies and English language arts standards. In the first part of the unit, students completed a mock Constitutional Convention at which they took on the roles of delegates. There were several standards-based goals in this segment. First, students used their research skills to find out about the delegate whose role they would take. In addition, they learned how to conduct themselves and participate in a whole-class debate (English language arts standard). Finally, they learned the issues and basic content in the Constitution (history and social science standard).

At this point in the unit, the students have completed their study of the main text of the Constitution and are now studying the Bill of Rights. During this segment, the students are studying how the ideals in the Bill of Rights relate to contemporary society. In order to do this, they first worked in pairs with the actual Bill of Rights and paraphrased each amendment (English language arts standard). Then, in this lesson, they are reading real-life situations to determine which amendment is relevant to the situation.

**What makes this lesson appropriate for English language learners?**

The students work with nonfiction text, the Bill of Rights, prior to application of knowledge from the text. At the beginning of the class, I model how to work through a question in order to answer it: Read the question, look through the amendments, apply information from the text to the problem, and write it up. Another indication of lesson appropriateness for ELLs is that students work in heterogeneous groups based on linguistic and cognitive abilities. The design of the lesson and the use of small groups allow my ELLs to have extended time using all of their language skills for academic purposes.

## LESSON PLAN

### Standards:

- Students will describe how ideals expressed in key documents relate to the powers of state, national, and local governments. Students will understand rights of the individual.
- Students will apply their knowledge of the meaning of nonfiction material.
- Students will use agreed-upon rules for informal discussion in small groups.

### Lesson Topic: The Bill of Rights

### Objectives:

**Language Skills:**

**Speaking/Listening**

- Students paraphrase text orally, receiving assistance from the teacher.
- Students practice expressing dissent and reaching consensus.

**Reading/Writing**

- Students use their own notes as a resource for explaining how an amendment is relevant to a contemporary scenario.
- Students support assertions with details from the text and explain how a specific amendment is relevant to the situation.

**Content Skills:**

- Students understand the rights of the individual.

**Thinking/Study Skills:**

- Students refer to notes to find answers.
- Students paraphrase text.
- Students guess meaning from context (unfamiliar vocabulary in the situations provided to the students).
- Students relate a historical document to contemporary life.

**Key Vocabulary:**

- Amendment, paraphrase, rights, consensus, dissent

### Materials:

- Student notes from previous lesson (paraphrase Bill of Rights)
- Teacher-provided handout
- Social studies textbook (as a reference)

## Motivation: (5 min.)

Class begins with a short, verbal, whole-class review of the purpose of the Bill of Rights and its origin in Anti-Federalist distrust of a strong central government. As part of this discussion, the teacher elicits layers of government (federal, state, local) and asks, "Where does the individual fit in?"

## Presentation: (15 min.)

Teacher explains the lesson: Students will analyze contemporary, realistic scenarios in which the Bill of Rights apply. Teacher reminds students that scenarios might include government actions, and it is up to them to determine how the Bill of Rights protects individuals. It will be their job, working in pairs, to read and figure out which amendment applies in each situation.

Teacher distributes papers and leads students as they complete the first example together. Teacher asks students to paraphrase the scenario. Teacher asks students which amendment is relevant and why, prompting students to refer to notes. Teacher elicits written responses from students. Response must include explanation of situation and connection to the amendment.

## Practice/Application: (45 min.)

Students work in pairs. Students alternate reading aloud to one another in "one foot voices" as they work through scenarios. Teacher circulates to intervene and assist only when necessary. In pairs, students read each situation, paraphrase, refer to notes, formulate response, and write a joint response.

## Review/Evaluation: (15 min.)

Students check answers in four-person groups and attempt to reach consensus. Teacher observes group work. Class reviews scenarios in which students could not reach consensus. Students and teacher ask and answer questions on content and language such as vocabulary from the text.

## Extension:

- Students choose one amendment from the Bill of Rights that they think they would miss most if they didn't have it and explain their choice in a written paragraph.
- Each student writes three questions for follow-up discussion on Bill of Rights.

## Constitutional Convention — English

**Name** **Date**

After each day of debating, you will be responsible for writing a paragraph explaining the issue, describing the different sides of the debate, and summarizing the conclusion of the debate.

You will write three separate paragraphs. The three paragraphs will count as a test grade. This is a Type 3 assignment.*

**The following will be the FCAs** for the paragraphs:**

| | |
|---|---|
| **Paragraph One:** | |
| Topic sentence introducing the issue | 5 |
| One side of the issue (who, what, why) | 10 |
| The other side of the issue (who, what, why) | 10 |
| The result of the debate (the compromise) | 10 |
| **Paragraph Two:** | |
| Topic sentence introducing the issue | 5 |
| One side of the issue (who, what, why) | 10 |
| The other side of the issue (who, what, why) | 10 |
| The result of the debate (the compromise) | 10 |
| **Paragraph Three:** | |
| Topic sentence introducing the issue | 5 |
| One side of the issue (who, what, why) | 10 |
| The other side of the issue (who, what, why) | 10 |
| The result of the debate (the compromise) | 10 |
| **Total Points** | **105** |

When you are done, you will take these paragraphs and build a five-paragraph essay in class. The parts of the five-paragraph essay are the introductory paragraph, the body (the three paragraphs above), and the concluding paragraph. The five-paragraph essay will count as another test grade with different FCAs.

* Type 3 Writing: Formal writing that has substantive content in a single draft. It meets up to three specific standards or expectations, called Focus Correction Areas (FCAs). The writing can take almost any form—essay, story, letter, poem, report, etc.—and be done in any content area or subject matter.

Before submitting to the teacher, the writer reads the draft out loud to himself or herself and edits it. Teacher evaluation is limited to the FCAs.

** Focus Correction Areas (FCAs): Elements of writing to be evaluated. FCAs include mechanics, usage, spelling, and so forth, as well as aspects of structure and content.

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From *Five Types of Writing* by John J. Collins.

Collins, John. (1992). *Developing writing and thinking skills across the curriculum: A practical program for schools.* Andover, MA: The Network, Inc.

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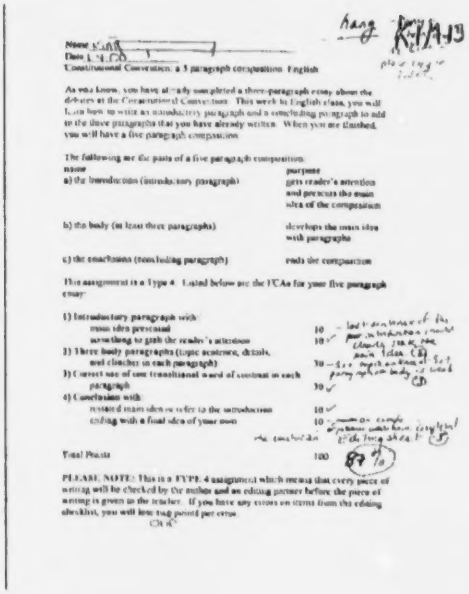
## Sample Student Work



Constitutional Convention: a 5 paragraph composition English

As you know, you have already completed a three-paragraph essay about the debates at the Constitutional Convention. This week in English class, you will learn how to write an introductory paragraph and a concluding paragraph to add to the three paragraphs that you have already written. When you are finished, you will have a five paragraph composition.

The following are the parts of a five paragraph composition:

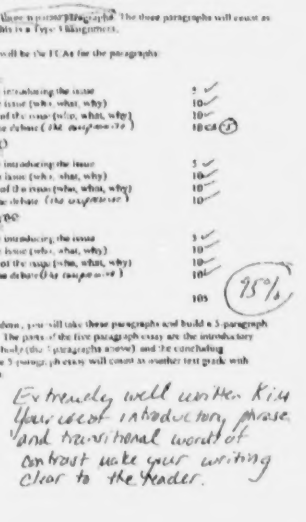
| name | purpose |
|---|---|
| a) the introduction (introductory paragraph) | gets reader's attention and previews the main idea of the composition |
| b) the body (at least three paragraphs) | develops the main idea with paragraphs |
| c) the conclusions (concluding paragraph) | ends the composition |

This assignment is a Type 4. Listed below are the FCAs for your five paragraph essay:

| | |
|---|---|
| 1) Introductory paragraph with: | |
| main idea presented | 10 |
| something to grab the reader's attention | 10 |
| 2) Three body paragraphs (topic sentence, details, and clincher in each paragraph) | 30 |
| 3) Correct use of one transitional word of contrast in each paragraph | 30 |
| 4) Conclusion with: | |
| restated main idea or refer to the introduction | 10 |
| ending with a final idea of your own | 10 |
| Total Points | 100 |

PLEASE NOTE: This is a TYPE 4 assignment which means that every piece of writing will be checked by the author and an editing partner before the piece of writing is given to the teacher. If you have any errors on items from the editing checklist, you will lose two points per error.

Oh K



Constitutional Convention

After each day of debating, you will be responsible to write a paragraph explaining the issue, describing the different sides of the debate, and summarizing the conclusion of the debate.

You will write three paragraphs. The three paragraphs will count as a test grade. This is a Type 3 Assignment.

The following will be the FCAs for the paragraphs:

| | |
|---|---|
| Paragraph One: | |
| Topic sentence introducing the issue | 5 |
| One side of the issue (who, what, why) | 10 |
| The other side of the issue (who, what, why) | 10 |
| The result of the debate (the compromise) | 10 |
| Paragraph Two: | |
| Topic sentence introducing the issue | 5 |
| One side of the issue (who, what, why) | 10 |
| The other side of the issue (who, what, why) | 10 |
| The result of the debate (the compromise) | 10 |
| Paragraph Three: | |
| Topic sentence introducing the issue | 5 |
| One side of the issue (who, what, why) | 10 |
| The other side of the issue (who, what, why) | 10 |
| The result of the debate (the compromise) | 10 |
| Total | 105 |

When you are done, you will take these paragraphs and build a 5-paragraph essay in class. The parts of the five paragraph essay are the introductory paragraph, the body (the 3 paragraphs above), and the concluding paragraph. The 5 paragraph essay will count as another test grade with different FCAs.

Extremely well written Kim. Your use of introductory phrase and transitional words of contrast make your writing clear to the reader.

## Constitutional Convention: A Five-Paragraph Composition

English

**Name** _____ **Date** _____

You have already completed three paragraphs about the debates at the Constitutional Convention. This week in English class, you will learn how to write an introductory paragraph and a concluding paragraph to add to the three paragraphs that you have already written. When you are finished you will have a five-paragraph composition.

**The following are the parts of a five-paragraph composition.**

| **Name** | **Purpose** |
|---|---|
| a) The introduction (introductory paragraph) | Gets reader's attention and presents the main idea of the composition |
| b) The body (at least three paragraphs) | Develops the main idea with paragraphs |
| c) The conclusion (concluding paragraph) | Ends the composition |

This assignment is a Type 4*. Listed below are the FCAs** for your five-paragraph essay:

| | |
|---|---|
| 1) **Introductory paragraph** with | |
| Main idea presented | 10 |
| Something to grab the reader's attention | 10 |
| 2) **Three body paragraphs** (topic sentence, details and clincher in each paragraph) | 30 |
| 3) Correct use of one **transitional word** of contrast in each paragraph | 30 |
| 4) **Conclusion** with restated main idea or refer to the introduction | 10 |
| Ending with a final idea of your own | 10 |
| **Total Points** | **100** |

* Type 4 Writing: Every piece of writing will be checked by the author and an editing partner before the piece of writing is given to the teacher. If you have any errors on items from the editing checklist, both the author and editor will lose two points per error.

** Focus Correction Areas (FCAs): Elements of writing to be evaluated. FCAs include mechanics, usage, spelling, and so forth, as well as aspects of structure and content.

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From *Five Types of Writing* by John J. Collins.

Collins, John. (1992). *Developing writing and thinking skills across the curriculum: A practical program for schools*. Andover, MA: The Network, Inc.

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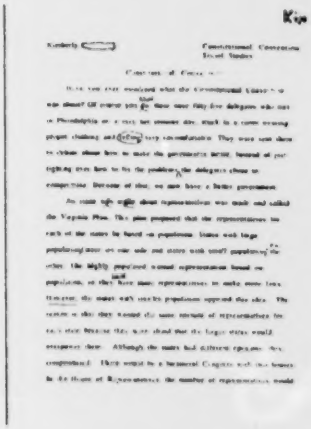
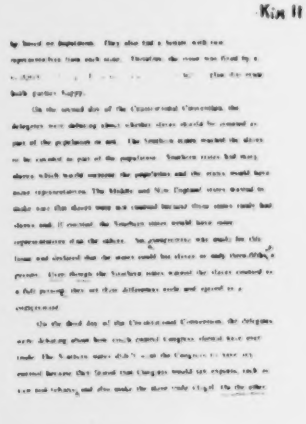
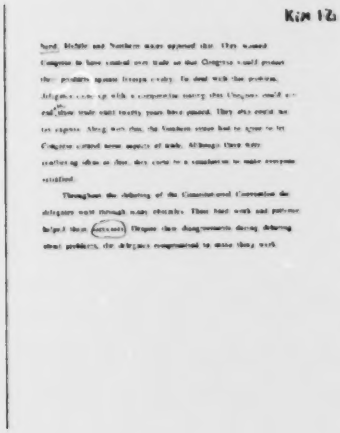
**Sample Student Work**



Kim 10



Kim 11



Kim 12

## Fight for Ratification — Social Studies

**Name** _____ **Date** _____

You and your partner are going to create a role play today. Together, you will write a dialogue between a Federalist and an Anti-Federalist. Either today or tomorrow you will be asked to perform your role play for the class, so be sure to do a good job.

**Your dialogue should include the following things:**

1. Two Federalist statements of how the Constitution fixes the weaknesses of the Articles of Confederation
2. Two Anti-Federalist arguments saying why each weakness can be fixed without the Constitution
3. Two Anti-Federalist statements of fears about a powerful government
4. Two Federalist arguments saying how the Constitution guards against abuse of power

Please write your role play below. It will be collected and copied so that both you and your partner will have a copy tomorrow. When writing the role play, be sure to write the name of the speaker before you write what he or she says.

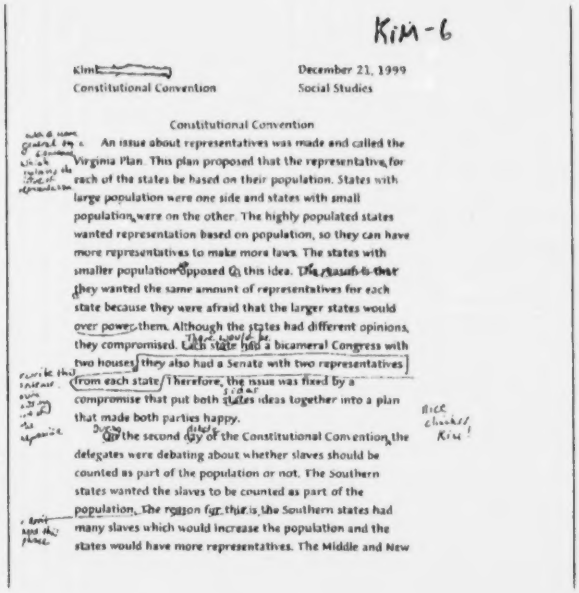
## Who Are You?
## The Constitutional Convention — Social Studies

You have been chosen as a delegate sent from one of the states to the Constitutional Convention. As you know, the Constitutional Convention has been called to change the Articles of Confederation. On May 28, 1787, you are expected to join the meeting in Philadelphia along with 54 other delegates. George Washington will lead the Convention in the role of President of the Convention.

Before you take part in the Convention, you need to review several things about the new nation to be a well-prepared delegate. You will need to review population information about the entire country in the late 1700s. In addition, you will need to review what is most important to you and the people from the colony you represent (your constituency). Finally, you will need to consider how you and your colony fit into the entire United States of America.

Good luck and be serious. You will determine the direction that the new United States of America will take.

### Sample Student Work



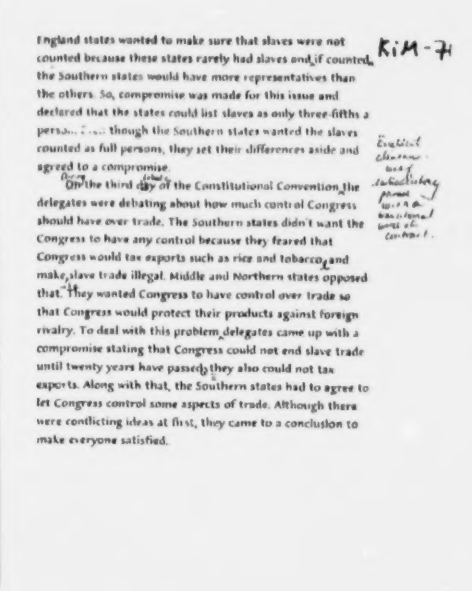
KiM-6

Kim [redacted] — December 21, 1999
Constitutional Convention — Social Studies

Constitutional Convention

An issue about representatives was made and called the Virginia Plan. This plan proposed that the representative for each of the states be based on their population. States with large population were one side and states with small population were on the other. The highly populated states wanted representation based on population, so they can have more representatives to make more laws. The states with smaller population opposed to this idea. They wanted the same amount of representatives for each state because they were afraid that the larger states would over power them. Although the states had different opinions, they compromised. Each state has a bicameral Congress with two houses, they also had a Senate with two representatives from each state. Therefore, the issue was fixed by a compromise that put both states ideas together into a plan that made both parties happy.

On the second day of the Constitutional Convention, the delegates were debating about whether slaves should be counted as part of the population or not. The Southern states wanted the slaves to be counted as part of the population. The reason for this is the Southern states had many slaves which would increase the population and the states would have more representatives. The Middle and New



KiM-7

England states wanted to make sure that slaves were not counted because these states rarely had slaves and if counted, the Southern states would have more representatives than the others. So, compromise was made for this issue and declared that the states could list slaves as only three-fifths a person... though the Southern states wanted the slaves counted as full persons, they set their differences aside and agreed to a compromise.

On the third day of the Constitutional Convention, the delegates were debating about how much control Congress should have over trade. The Southern states didn't want the Congress to have any control because they feared that Congress would tax exports such as rice and tobacco, and make slave trade illegal. Middle and Northern states opposed that. They wanted Congress to have control over trade so that Congress would protect their products against foreign rivalry. To deal with this problem, delegates came up with a compromise stating that Congress could not end slave trade until twenty years have passed, they also could not tax exports. Along with that, the Southern states had to agree to let Congress control some aspects of trade. Although there were conflicting ideas at first, they came to a conclusion to make everyone satisfied.

## Who Are You?
## Constitutional Convention — Social Studies

**Name** _____ **Date** _____

**Please answer the following questions about yourself.**

What is your name? _____

What state do you represent? _____

Does your state have a large or small population? large small

Does your state use slave labor? many slaves few slaves no slaves

How do people in your state make a living? _____

_____

List the five most important products for your state:

a)

b)

c)

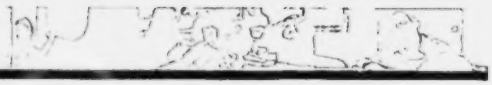
d)

e)

Does your colony import or export more goods? Import more Export more

What other states are similar to yours? _____

What do you know about yourself? _____



**Resources**

1. Scenarios come from *Our Living Constitution: Then and Now* by Jerry Aten. Order from Good Apple, 1204 Buchanan Street, Box 299, Carthage, IL 62321-0299.

2. The paragraph-writing template is published by Education Performance Systems, Inc., 600 West Cummings Park, Woburn, MA 01801 (Phone: 781.932.1144).

3. Collins, John. (1992). *Developing writing and thinking skills across the curriculum: A practical program for schools.* Andover, MA: The Network, Inc. (Phone: 800.932.4477)

4. Information on delegates to the Constitutional Convention can be found at http://www.nara.gov/exhall/charters/Constitution/confath.html

5. The National Archives Web site is useful: http://www.nara.gov

6. The text used in this lesson is: Herman J. Viola (Ed.). (1998). *Why we remember: U.S. history through reconstruction.* New York: Scott Forsman Addison Wesley Publishers, Inc.

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Jolane Roy
English Language Arts
Grade 7
Unit: The Elements of a Short Story

## UNIT PLAN

### Standard(s)/Descriptors

From the English Language Arts Curriculum Guide, Grades 5-8, Lowell Public Schools, Lowell, Massachusetts:

- ☐ Students will use agreed-upon rules for informal and formal discussions in small and large groups.
- ☐ Students will identify, analyze, and apply knowledge of theme in literature and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding.
- ☐ Students will identify, analyze, and apply knowledge of the structure and elements of fiction and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding.
- ☐ Students will write compositions with a clear focus, developing the composition with logically related ideas and adequate supporting detail.
- ☐ Students will obtain information by using a variety of media and evaluate the quality of the information obtained.

### Content and Language Concepts and Skills

- ☐ Students will learn the terminology used to identify the structure and elements of fiction.
- ☐ Students will apply that knowledge to analyze selected literature samples.
- ☐ Students will write their own original short stories that illustrate their understanding of the elements of fiction.
- ☐ Students will write plot summaries.
- ☐ Students will write expository paragraphs explaining theme.

- ☐ Students will work together in groups to identify elements of fiction in both literary and personal works.
- ☐ Students will use the writing process to complete written assignments.
- ☐ Students will use paragraph and story planning templates to organize their writing.
- ☐ Students will use transitional words indicating time sequence or beginning-middle-end.
- ☐ Students will provide evidence from the text to support their ideas.
- ☐ Students will learn to identify elements of fiction whether presented in written or video form.

## Activities

**Prior to the unit**

- ☐ Students read a variety of short stories, concentrating on reading strategies and identifying the main idea.
- ☐ Students practice highlighting strategy to provide evidence from the text to support answers.

**Unit Sequence**

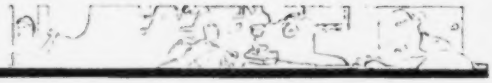
1. Teacher conducts direct instruction on terminology and identifying elements of fiction (refer to previously read stories to illustrate).
2. Teacher reads story aloud to students ("The Sniper" by Liam O'Flaherty) to ground next steps.
3. Students complete story map in groups to identify elements of fiction.
4. Class compares results in whole-group discussion using evidence from the text.
5. Class makes a plot diagram using story maps.
6. Class takes test on content (elements, terminology).
   Teacher provides further content instruction if necessary.
7. Class watches video of a story ("House of Dies Drear" by Virginia Hamilton), taking notes on a story map.
8. Repeat steps 3-5.
9. Students plan and write an original short story, using one of three pictures from literature book for inspiration, and publish final copy.
10. Students complete a story map for original story.
11. Repeat steps 3-5 for stories written by each member of group.
12. Using writing process and computers, students write a plot summary.
13. Using writing process and computers, students write an expository paragraph explaining the theme of one of the stories read.

## Materials/Resources

- ☐ Literature textbook
- ☐ Copies of all short stories
- ☐ Video
- ☐ Templates: story map, story planning template, plot diagram template, "cheat sheet" (steps for analyzing a short story), paragraph templates
- ☐ Models of plot diagrams, story maps, plot summaries, and theme paragraphs
- ☐ Rubrics for assessment (students involved in development)
- ☐ Construction paper, highlighters, and markers
- ☐ Computers for word processing
- ☐ Peers and teachers

## Assessment

- ☐ Test on literary content
- ☐ Conferencing and ongoing class evaluation as each step is completed
- ☐ Development of class rubrics
- ☐ Process grade (including completion of all steps, story maps, and templates)
- ☐ Short stories
- ☐ Plot diagrams completed in groups
- ☐ Written plot summaries and theme explanations
- ☐ Student self-evaluations in journals (both as individuals and as groups)



## LESSON PLAN

### Standards:

- Students will use agreed-upon rules for informal and formal discussions in small and large groups.
- Students will identify, analyze, and apply knowledge of the structure and elements of fiction and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding.

### Lesson Topic: **Creating plot diagrams based on students' original short stories**

### Objectives:

**Language Skills:**

**Speaking/Listening**

- Students use the appropriate terminology in analyzing short stories.
- Students discuss the stories with group members.
- Students explain their choices and opinions using appropriate terms and evidence from the stories.

**Reading/Writing**

- Students read stories written by peers.
- Students paraphrase events from the story.

**Content Skills:**

- Students demonstrate understanding of plot structure and its relationship to other elements of fiction.

**Thinking/Study Skills:**

- Students apply academic content information to sample stories.
- Students use notes from direct instruction to evaluate stories.

**Key Vocabulary:**

- Plot, story, setting, conflict, universal conflict, protagonist, antagonist, exposition, complication, rising action, climax, falling action, denouement, resolution

## Materials:

- Original short stories written by students (enough copies for each in the group, distributed the previous day and read for homework)
- Student notes on elements of fiction
- Teacher-created guide sheet of steps to take to fulfill assignment
- Story maps for original stories
- Models of class-generated plot diagrams
- Class-generated scoring rubrics
- Large sheets of construction paper, markers

## Motivation: (5 min.)

Class begins with a reminder of the outcome of today's activity: to display their work and to demonstrate that each student has fulfilled the task of becoming a short story writer who is aware of and includes the elements of a short story. They will then be allowed to publish and display the story. (Most students want to feel like real writers and take this activity very seriously.)

## Presentation: (5-10 min.)

The teacher reviews the process and important points and terms that will be used in diagramming the stories, referring to the models displayed in the class. The grading criteria for the activity are also reviewed. Time is allowed for questions. Each student is provided a summary sheet with this information, called a "cheat sheet."

## Practice/Application: (30+ min.)

In a small group, students work through one short story identifying elements as they exist in that story. If the members of the group cannot agree on these elements, they must discuss them using evidence from the story. If an element cannot be identified, the group may brainstorm changes with the author that will make the story work. The ultimate decision regarding changes is up to the author.

Then they chart the elements in the appropriate place on the plot diagram and label each. After checking in with the teacher, the group displays the plot diagram, and, time permitting, moves to the next story in turn. This task may need to go into another class period.

During this process, the teacher circulates, listening for discussions and intervening only when necessary or asked by the group.

## Review/Evaluation: (5-10 min.)

As each plot diagram is completed, the teacher asks one student from the group to explain it using appropriate terms. All members need to be able to defend the group's analysis, such as identification of the story's protagonist.

Students self-assess, using the grading rubric developed by the class. Individual plot diagrams and final version of stories are graded, using the rubric.

## Extension:

- Each student publishes an original story in the computer room using graphics.
- Students use story maps and plot diagrams to learn to write plot summaries.
- Students write expository paragraphs explaining the theme of the story, providing evidence from the text and diagrams.
- Students continue to apply these skills to other stories, novels, plays, etc., throughout the year.

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**Sample Student Work**

The Mountains. by [illegible]

Once upon a time there was a boy named Mariano that wanted to climb a mountain. One day he went to the store and bought alot of equipment. One day he started to climb up the mountain. It is almost at the top. He had been climbing for three hours. He fianally reached the top. He wasn't feeling that good.

He called for help and Andrew was on the way with a helicopter. I saw him and landed the helicopter. I get out and helped Mariano. The helicopter broke down. I grabed the blankets and put them over him. We started to walk down the mountain. We were very cold. We have been walking for two and a half hours. We had fiarnaly reached the bottom and there was an ambulance waiting at the bottom of the mountain. We were both sick. I was out in less than one week. He was out in two weeks. We were fine after that. We lived a happy life.

The End

By [illegible]

Cheryl Boss
English Language Arts
Grade 8
Unit: Newspapers Now and Then

## UNIT PLAN

### Standard(s)/Descriptors

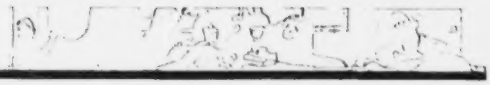
From the English Language Arts Curriculum Guide, Grades 5-8, Lowell Public Schools, Lowell, Massachusetts:

- ☐ Students will use agreed-upon rules for informal and formal discussion in small groups and large groups.
- ☐ Students will identify the basic facts and essential ideas in what they have read, heard, or viewed.
- ☐ Students will identify, analyze, and apply knowledge of the structure, elements, and meaning of nonfiction or informational material and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding.
- ☐ Students will learn to write compositions with a clear focus, developing the composition with logically related ideas and adequate supporting detail.
- ☐ Students will use knowledge of standard English conventions to edit their writing.

### Content and Language Concepts and Skills

**Content:**

- ☐ Students will learn the impact of print journalism format.
- ☐ Students will learn the importance of newspapers for daily life.



### Language Concepts and Skills:

- ☐ Students will learn about writing in different newspaper genres—news stories, editorials, obituaries, features, store ads, job ads, and columns.
- ☐ Students will learn newspaper terminology.

## Activities

- ☐ Examining a newspaper to discover format and find characteristic items
- ☐ Planning and contracting with peers and teachers to create an original newspaper in cooperative groups
- ☐ Writing newspaper items and revising for publication
- ☐ Drawing illustrations for ads
- ☐ Creating banners and headlines
- ☐ Designing the layout and assembling pieces to create the final product for display

## Materials/Resources

- ☐ Newspapers
- ☐ Terminology list
- ☐ Search worksheets for Internet and social studies materials
- ☐ Paper, pens, colored pencils, glue, coffee (to brush on paper to simulate parchment)

## Assessment

- ☐ Individual written contributions to the group's newspaper
- ☐ Final product (Each student gets the group grade.)
- ☐ Students' written reflection pieces about the newspaper project, stating what they learned about the group process, themselves as students, and the importance of newspapers
- ☐ Teacher observations and notes on students' participation in groups

## LESSON PLAN

### Standards:

- Students will use agreed-upon rules for informal and formal discussion in small groups and large groups.
- Students will pose questions, listen to the ideas of others, and contribute their own information or ideas in group discussions and interviews in order to acquire new knowledge.
- Students will identify the basic facts and essential ideas in what they have read, heard, or viewed.
- Students will identify, analyze, and apply knowledge of the structure, elements, and meaning of nonfiction or informational material and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding.

### Lesson Topic: **The format, content, and purpose of a daily newspaper**

### Objectives:

**Language Skills:**

**Speaking/Listening**

- Students comment on newspaper format, question, and respond to their peers.

**Reading/Writing**

- Students scan text to locate items.

**Content Skills:**

- Students discover the parts of a newspaper, its format, types of writing, and purposes newspapers serve.

**Thinking Skills/Study Skills:**

- Students research in small groups to answer the questions posed by the teacher.

**Key Vocabulary:**

- AP, banner, byline, caption, column, dateline, editor, editorial, feature, headline, index, reported

## Materials:

- *Boston Globe*
- Pencil
- Paper
- A list of questions to answer
- A list of newspaper-specific terms

## Motivation:

Students are reminded that they will be creating group newspapers about the Civil War. Today's lesson will help them become familiar with the parts of a newspaper that they will need to create.

## Presentation:

Teacher draws students' attention to the list of newspaper terms and asks students which terms they already know. Teacher asks students to locate these items in the *Boston Globe* and to answer questions about the purpose and utility of newspapers.

## Practice/Application:

Working in groups, students locate items from the list of newspaper terms and write page numbers on the list. Students discuss the purpose and utility of newspapers, based on prior knowledge and on examining the paper together.

## Review/Evaluation:

Groups report results of their discussion to the whole class.

## Extension:

- Students compare sections of the *Boston Globe* and any other newspaper.
- Students select and create portions of a newspaper.
- Students work with a group to create a newspaper.

**Resource**

Terms come from *Publishing a Newspaper* by Marjorie Wein Belshaw, ISBN- 1-55734-209-1, Copyright 1996. Order from TCM Teacher Credited Materials, P.O. Box 1040, Huntington Beach, CA 92647.

Steve Cyr
Reading
Grade 8
Unit: Personal History in Literature

## UNIT PLAN

### Standard(s)/Descriptors

From the English Language Arts Curriculum Guide, Grades 5-8, Lowell Public Schools, Lowell, Massachusetts:

- ☐ Students will use agreed-upon rules for informal and formal discussion in small and large groups.
- ☐ Students will make oral presentations that demonstrate appropriate consideration of audience, purpose, and the information to be conveyed.
- ☐ Students will acquire and use correctly an advanced reading vocabulary of English words, identifying meanings through an understanding of word relationships.
- ☐ Students will decode accurately and understand new words encountered in their reading materials, drawing on a variety of strategies as needed, and then use these words accurately in speaking and writing.
- ☐ Students will identify the basic facts and essential ideas in what they have read, heard, or viewed.
- ☐ Students will identify, analyze, and apply knowledge of the characteristics of different genres.
- ☐ Students will identify, analyze, and apply knowledge of theme in literature and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding.
- ☐ Students will plan and present effective dramatic readings, recitations, and performances that demonstrate appropriate consideration of audience and purpose.

## Content and Language Concepts and Skills

- ☐ Students will learn the characteristics of historical fiction, biography, and autobiography.
- ☐ Students will build speechmaking and debate skills.
- ☐ Students will build vocabulary.
- ☐ Students will build paraphrasing skills.

## Activities

- ☐ Students will write a fictionalized diary of a slave's life.
- ☐ Students will debate the institution of slavery or write and deliver an abolitionist speech.
- ☐ Students will role-play people living on plantations.
- ☐ Students will make character webs using new vocabulary.
- ☐ Students will compare the lives of slaves and those of slave owners.
- ☐ Students will write a dialogue between Harriet Tubman and Sojourner Truth.
- ☐ Students will watch an enactment of Sojourner Truth's speeches.
- ☐ Students will create a Civil War almanac.

## Materials/Resources

- ☐ Books: *The Underground Railroad* by Sharon Cosner, *My Folks Don't Want to Talk About Slavery* by Belinda Hurmence, *To Be a Slave* by Julius Lester, *Harriet and the Promised Land* by Jacob Lawrence, *Harriet Tubman: Conductor on the Underground Railroad* by Ann Petry
- ☐ Notebooks
- ☐ Oak tag and markers
- ☐ Binding machine

## Assessment

- ☐ "Questions du jour"
- ☐ Civil War almanac, graded by English and social studies teachers
- ☐ Debates and role plays
- ☐ Slave's diary

## LESSON PLAN

### Standards:

- Students will use agreed-upon rules for informal and formal discussion in small and large groups.
- Students will acquire and use correctly an advanced reading vocabulary of English words, identifying meanings through an understanding of word relationships.
- Students will identify, analyze, and apply knowledge of the structure and elements of fiction and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding.

### Lesson Topic: Vocabulary

### Objectives:

**Language Skills:**

**Speaking/Listening**

- Students discuss personal reactions to a dramatization and a book.

**Reading/Writing**

- Students respond in writing to an open-ended question.
- Students refer to the text to support their interpretations.

**Content Skills:**

- Students apply vocabulary learned previously to a new topic.

**Thinking/Study Skills:**

- Students relate the experience of slavery to their own lives.
- Students integrate knowledge of slavery gained in social science and English language arts reading and discussion.

**Key Vocabulary:**

trough, pallet, quarters, shackle, squat, gourd, overseer, corn shuck, slobber, pen, fetch, demons, breeder, cower, gaggle, grief, maggot, cotton gin, rawhide, lard, misery, hobbling, sprouting, goblet, mammoth, retreat, barrel, gangly, mounted, artificial, encour:ter, scheming, scan, charred, linger, lath, orientation

## Materials:

- Markers
- Chart paper
- Vocabulary charts
- Vocabulary notebooks
- Journals
- *Harriet Tubman: Conductor on the Underground Railroad* by Ann Petry

## Presentation:

Teacher directs the students to respond in their journals to a "question du jour" that activates background knowledge from reading and social studies: If you had been a slave, would you have tried to escape on the Underground Railroad? Why or why not?

## Motivation:

Class discusses the life of a slave, based on a dramatization on Sojourner Truth and their reading of *Harriet Tubman.*

## Practice/Application:

Working in groups, students decide which words from previous vocabulary lessons they expect to find in a biography of Harriet Tubman. One student writes them on chart paper. A presenter from each group explains to the class why the group chose five of the words as likely to appear in a Tubman biography. Each subsequent group must present unique words.

## Review/Evaluation:

"Question du jour" checks comprehension and extends interpretation of the text. Group work reviews prior learning of vocabulary and text comprehension.

## Extension:

- Class continues reading *Harriet Tubman,* listing vocabulary words they find.

## CIVIL WAR ALMANAC RATING SHEET

Name: _____ Section: _____ Date: _____

| REQUIREMENTS | RATINGS |
|---|---|
| **1. Oak tag cover** | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| A. Authors' names and section on bottom right-hand corner | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| B. Title of almanac | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| C. Illustration | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| **2. Table of contents listing each topic and the page on which each may be found** | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| **3. Each individually numbered page containing a thorough answer to the 10 chosen questions** | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| • Proper use of paraphrasing and sufficient evidence of note taking, rather than copying word for word | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| A. Proper use of introductory paragraphs | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| B. Indentation of paragraphs | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| • Proper and well-written topic sentence and conclusions | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| A. Proper use of transition words | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| B. Questions thoroughly and fully answered | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| **4. An illustration accompanying each chosen question** | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| **5. Bibliography listing resources** | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| **6. Book neatly presented (overall neatness)** | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| **7. Passed in on time** | 1 2 3 4 5 |

# PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES AND TOOLS

In a study group, members can use strategies that are appropriate to their topics. The video shows the study group analyzing standards, examining student work, and discussing professional literature. These strategies are sustainable: Once a group has learned to use them, they can be used repeatedly, led by group members without an outside facilitator. This section provides brief overviews of each strategy used in the video and related tools. For further reading on sustainable strategies, see Resources for Further Study.

## SUSTAINABLE STRATEGY: ANALYZING STANDARDS

A standard is a broad learning goal. In order to teach to a standard, teachers must analyze and interpret it to see what it entails. The following tools, the standards analysis tool and the standards-based unit and lesson plan protocols, provide a framework for analyzing standards so that teachers can plan for instruction. Using these tools repeatedly in a study group can result in conversations that extend teachers' understanding of their content area and the standards for students, and illuminate teachers' pedagogical strengths and knowledge gaps.

### Guidelines for Using the Standards Analysis Tool

**The standards analysis tool guides teachers to address the following questions:**

- What concepts and skills make up this standard?
- What activities or strategies help students acquire the concepts embedded in this standard?
- What materials will be needed?
- What will assessment look like?

Analysis of the standard is the first step in designing curricular units and lesson plans.

**Suggested Steps for Using the Standards Analysis Tool in a Study Group**

- ☐ Study group members choose a standard to analyze. If members represent different grades or subject areas, the standard should be one that cuts across the curriculum (e.g., a reading or writing standard).

- ☐ Depending on the make-up of the group, members work in pairs or triads to respond to the questions and make notes on the template. All of the pairs or triads work on the same standard and fill in the entire template.

- ☐ When filling in the template, group members focus primarily on content: the concepts and skills comprising the standard, and instructional strategies and materials that can help students meet the standard. It is essential that study group members not focus on what their students can or cannot do in relation to the standard.

- ☐ After pairs or triads have completed the template, the whole group comes together to review their responses. This is a good time for teachers to share expertise and identify gaps in their own content knowledge.

- ☐ Once group members have reached a general consensus about what the standard entails, members discuss ways that diverse learners can be included in teaching to this standard.

- ☐ After group members have thoroughly discussed the content of the standard and ways to address the needs of diverse learners in teaching to the standard, members design unit and lesson plans individually or in groups.

- ☐ Group members can continue to analyze standards individually or in groups. Sharing the results in a group discussion provides the first step for designing standards-based units and lessons.

## Standards Analysis Tool

**Standard(s)/Proficiency:**

**Concepts/Skills to be Learned:**

**Activity/Strategies/Instruction:**

**Materials/Resources:**

**Assessment:**

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## Standards-Based Unit and Lesson Plan Protocols

These unit and lesson planning tools remind users to specify standards and language learning objectives.

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## UNIT PLAN

**Standard(s)/Descriptors:**

**Content and Language Concepts and Skills:**

**Activities:**

**Materials/Resources:**

**Assessment:**

Reproduced with permission from
Short, D., & Adger, C. (1991). [Standards-based unit plan]. Unpublished presentation.

## LESSON PLAN

**Standard(s):**

**Lesson topic:**

**Objectives:**

**Language Skills:**

**Speaking/Listening**

**Reading/Writing**

**Structures**

**Content Skills:**

**Thinking/Study Skills:**

**Key Vocabulary:**

**Materials:**

**Motivation:**

**Presentation:**

**Practice/Application:**

**Review/Evaluation:**

**Extension:**

Reproduced with permission from
Short, D. (1991). *How to integrate language and content instruction: A training manual* (2nd Ed.). Washington, DC: Center for Applied Linguistics.

## SUSTAINABLE STRATEGY: EXAMINING STUDENT WORK

This strategy provides a framework for examining student work in a nonjudgmental, structured way. It focuses study group discussion on teaching and learning and allows teachers to search for evidence of standards implementation. Examining a student's work allows group members to see what the student work suggests about the child and his or her learning environment. Repeated use of this strategy helps group members to

- Reach a deeper appreciation and understanding of the serious effort and intent that students bring to their work,
- Reflect on ways to improve teaching and learning for groups of students as well as individual students,
- Benefit from the various perspectives and expertise of colleagues, and
- Gain a deeper understanding of standards implementation with culturally and linguistically diverse students.

## Protocol for Discussing Student Work

**Structure**

The discussion of student work occurs in small groups (5-15 teachers, administrators, and other interested adults) with a facilitator and a presenting teacher.

- Facilitator: One person is designated to guide the group through the phases of the discussion.
- Presenting teacher: One person is responsible for bringing a piece of student work for examination. The presenting teacher is asked to make no comments about the work, the child, or the assignment before or during the first steps of the discussion. This is an opportunity for the presenting teacher to listen to what people notice about the work and the questions they ask.

**Discussion**

**Getting started:** The discussion begins with everyone looking at the student work. The presenting teacher hands out copies of the work. At this point, the presenting teacher says nothing about the work, its context, or the student. The participants read or observe the work in silence (taking notes if they wish).

**Describing the work:** The facilitator asks, "What do you see?" The group describes any aspect of the work that they note. Judgments about quality and comments about taste (I like, I don't like) are discouraged. If judgments emerge, the facilitator asks the speaker to describe the evidence on which the judgment is based. The focus of these comments is simply to describe what is there.

**Raising questions:** The facilitator asks, "What questions does this work raise for you?" Group members ask any questions about the work, the student, the circumstances under which it was produced, the assignment, the curriculum. (This could be an especially appropriate time to ask questions regarding standards and ELLs). The presenting teacher makes notes but does not respond. The facilitator notes the questions on chart paper and reminds the group that they may not get answers to all their questions. What is important is noticing the issues and questions that the group raises.

**Speculating about the work:** The facilitator asks, "What do you think this student is working on?" "What standard?" Participants offer their ideas.

**Hearing from the presenting teacher:** Having listened since the beginning of the discussion, the presenting teacher now adds his or her perspective on each of the previous phases of the discussion: description, questioning, and speculating. Often the presenting teacher has relevant information to share with the group. The presenting teacher offers comments on any unexpected things that she or he learned.

**Discussing implications for standards-based teaching and learning with ELLs:** The group and the presenting teacher discuss new understandings and questions that this discussion stimulated about teaching and learning in their own classrooms and ways to support students.

### Final Reflection

The facilitator asks the group for final thoughts and asks for a volunteer to bring student work the next time and a volunteer to facilitate the next discussion of student work.

*This protocol is adapted from S. Seidel, Project Zero, Harvard Graduate School of Education.*
*The primary modification is discussing standards implementation as a feature in the protocol.*

Reproduced with permission from
Cushman, K. (1996). Looking collaboratively at student work: An essential toolkit. *Horace. 13,(2).*

## Student Work Sample

**Following are the student work and self-evaluation discussed in the video.**

1. TS
2. SD/P(60)
3. Sec(12)
4. Timer(20)

Section #
December 13, 19

(4)

"My Life as a British Uniform"

I was a bright red coat with white pants and I was always normly a special British Soldier. ✓ My owner took good care of me, and when I got dirty my owner would wash me and then got ✓ I could ✓ hang me up out side near the big trees so I can be dry. Then he would put me in the closet near the shiny musket so I wouldn't get dirty. When he put me in the closet and shut the door and it was so dark it was so scary. My owner was a tall British soldier ✓ AP who would wear me proudly to [illegible] me at[illegible]

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(5)

My owner took me out of the closet, put me on, took the shiny musket, and we headed downstairs for breakfast. After breakfast where we rushed to get the gun powder, I knew we were going to battle. I felt scared! As we were outside it was as cold as ahem I am in a river and it is full with ice. After I saw many people with Redcoats like me. When we were ready we saw more redcoats coming to help us. I fight the colonists. I felt brave and happy that more Redcoats came, but I was still scared of the battle. I could feel my frien master shaking and I think me shiver too. When we got to the battle field, we saw the colonists standing there and staring at us. As they shot at us, my master blood was all over me and I was as smelly as a dog

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(4)

When my owner and I were marching in the colonies...
my master got shot. the bullet went through my shoulder
and I could feel the pain. My master's blood was bright
red and it looked like slime as it dripped down the front
of my fabric. like he just ran out of blood left...
Then he went (behind the bushes) and hid there until
the battle was over. when the shooting stopped he
walk a long way to find a river to clean me off.
I was glad I was no longer smelly or dirty, but
I got used to it. It took a long way to get home.
It took miles just to get home. when we got there,
my master wife sewed me up and I was clean again,
but there was another battle coming up. When morning came

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he took me out of the closet, put me on, ran out the door
to go to battle. when we were walking through the bushes
the branches pulled me and made holes in me.
and it really hurt.

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How did this happen? You aren't telling me??

My owner was bleeding to death and he looked like (12)
he was dying and his blood was all over my sleeve and
my neck was dripping with blood. I wished he wouldn't
leave me all alone by my self. He ripped my sleeve and tied
it over his arm so it wouldn't come out.

Then some colonist walked looking for the Redcoats. They
spotted my owner (behind the bushes) and shot him three
more times. He quickly passed away. I had no more owner
to wear me and my master's blood was still covering me and
felt all alone and very scared. After they took my master
I V
lady, to buy him, It was a long way from home. My master's
wife sewed me up and made me clean. After that, Eve

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kept me in a closet) (and my clothes) One day she
took me out and I saw a British Soldier standing
there. I was thinking that I was getting a new
master. She handed me to him and I had a new owner
to take care of me and wear me. I felt so happy
to be worn again. Well I used to think a lot about
my first owner, now I don't have to worry about him
any more because I have a new owner to wear me
and take care of me. ~~Now I don't have to write~~
~~about~~ My old owner ~~because that~~ is the ~~just~~ for me, and
I have to move on with my life and my new owner.

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**Student Self-Evaluation**

Yasamin
Section A
December 21,

1. "21, and 23. Because number 21 tell you the demonstr
improvment in organization, content, paragraph
development, and we use words and put it in the
paragraph and we have to write up our own paragraph.
"23." tell you that to use note taking, summarizes,
and precise writing.

3. I learned about myself that I've been working hard...
for it and I been thinking more I found that
I been writing more.

4. I like most about the project was thinking more
and learning more, and doing more writing.

Keep it up - The more you write, the better you get -

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5. The least thing was writing it over and useing the book for underling.

6 Yes, because you have to think alot and write alot too.

7 You can make it easer and helping them.

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## SUSTAINABLE STRATEGY: DISCUSSING PROFESSIONAL LITERATURE

The purpose of reading and discussing professional literature is to learn about relevant research and policy that have implications for teaching and learning. In discussion, teachers can build knowledge about how what they have read may apply to their own situations. Reading and discussing professional literature can transport teachers to other settings, dispel myths, and deepen knowledge about topics of professional importance.

## Guidelines for Reading and Discussing Professional Literature

**Getting Started:**

- Select a book or article that has broad appeal to the group. Candidates can be found in association newsletters, professional journals, *Education Week* book reviews, or the Internet. Any group member may suggest or select a book.
- If possible, bring potential books or articles to the study group so group members can skim the text.
- Once the book is chosen, establish a timeline indicating when chapters will be discussed in the study group. For example, if a study group meets twice a month for a total of 4 hours, the group could dedicate 1 hour per month per chapter.
- Create a facilitation schedule. Have study group members volunteer to facilitate a chapter discussion. All group members are responsible for doing the reading, but facilitators must read the chapter with great care in order to facilitate the discussion.

**Facilitating the Discussion:**

- Facilitators should begin the chapter discussion by posing an open-ended question to the group, such as,
  - What was striking about this chapter?
  - What new ideas did you learn from reading this chapter?
- Facilitators should make sure that all group members participate in the discussion, encouraging quieter ones to speak and discouraging any group member from dominating the conversation.
- Facilitators may close the discussion by asking the group what new questions they have as a result of talking about the reading.
- Before ending the discussion, the facilitator should ask for a volunteer to facilitate the next discussion.

## VIDEO TRANSCRIPT

### STUDY GROUP PARTICIPANTS

Carolyn Adger
Cheryl Athanas
Cheryl Boss
Cheryl Brunelas
Nancy Clair
Steve Cyr
Valter DeSouza
Nancy B. Desrosiers
Jean Franco
Nancy Meehan
Hoa Nguyen
Deborah Romeo
Jolane Roy
Eileen Skovholt
Mark Sousa
Marney Stoumbelis

## TRANSCRIPT

### Video Part 1

### Standards-Based Teaching in Culturally Diverse Schools: Teachers' Views

**Narrator:** Everyone wants good schools. Educators, students, parents, and employers all have a stake in making sure that each student receives a high-quality education. But what does high quality mean? The standards movement is aimed at helping to define quality education—by making clear what students should know and what they should be able to do. Standards have the potential to improve schooling for all students, including English language learners. But translating the standards into classroom practice can be challenging. Teachers have to figure out what concepts and skills the standards include, and how to help their students acquire them. Teachers must choose instructional strategies that help students develop their language skills and content-area knowledge at the same time.

One way to support the hard work of getting standards into classrooms is through professional development. Working together in study groups, teachers can draw on each other's knowledge and determine what new information they need. This study group in Lowell, Massachusetts met twice a month for a year to analyze their school district's standards and build knowledge about teaching to the standards in culturally diverse classrooms. This group includes middle school teachers from ESL, bilingual, and content-area programs. Most group members had already worked with colleagues on standards implementation for two years. You'll see them working with students, talking about teaching, and grappling with some of the issues the standards raise for them.

**Eileen S.:** Do you think that since people are getting involved in standards and discussing standards, this group in particular or study teams, that teachers are talking to students differently in the classroom?

**Jolane R.:** I was just gonna say . . .

**Eileen S.:** And making kids more aware of what they need to know?

**Jolane R.:** I think we're giving them more the tools that we haven't given them before, not just to complete the work but also to be able to look at their own work and be able to ask a question like, "Why did I get this? Is it because?" As we give them focused correction areas, as we tell them up front what it is we want out of it and what we expect out of it. The more we give them that way, the more empowered they're going to be.

**Cheryl A.:** Why have we gotten to that now? Because we're—they're going to be tested. We're being pressured to make them be [?]. I mean I think that push has come to shove with that. That's why all this is coming to be.

**Cheryl Bo.:** I think part of it—and this may be heresy—I think part of it is that the group that's sitting here, before those standards even came out and were put in our hands, I daresay that a lot of people in this room were already addressing a lot of those standards in their classroom practice. So maybe that's why it's not, you know, I'm not consumed, even though they're hanging on my ceiling. I know what they are. I know what I'm focusing on. But I have no intention of going through a list and trying to cover every standard. It's just not gonna happen.

**Jolane R.:** But I think, and I found myself saying, getting more bang for the buck out of the lessons. I've found myself when I'm planning something, thinking what is it that I am covering and is there any different way that I can do something that will hit more. And in the English language arts, it's much easier . . .

**?:** It is.

**Jolane R.:** . . . to hit many of the standards in one lesson.

**Cheryl Bo.:** Didn't you do that before?

**Jolane R.:** I did, but I don't think as much as I'm doing it now. I don't think I've ever thought as much about my teaching and the purpose for each thing that I'm doing.

**Slide:** **Standards and Instruction**

**Narrator:** Interpreting the standards, and bringing them to life in classrooms, calls for extensive knowledge about content and pedagogy. Planning units and lessons aligned with the standards is not simply a mechanical task. These teachers reflect on their practice to make sure it's appropriate for their students. You'll see four teachers who work in culturally diverse schools talking about standards-based instruction that is appropriate for English language learners.

**Deborah R.:** She is extreme. How do you know that?

**Tina:** She follows wherever she goes.

**Deborah R.:** Okay. And what word actually lets you know she's very extreme.

**Tina:** Radical.

**Deborah R.:** Radical. Very good. Good use of vocabulary from English.

Within this unit there are several standards that I'm actually trying to incorporate in terms of learning goals for the students. There's several social studies standards dealing specifically with the content of the Constitution and understanding of the rights that are enumerated in the Bill of Rights. And, also, the students' understanding of how these documents actually affect lives today in contemporary society, what they look like today in society. And in terms of English language arts, throughout the unit, there are opportunities for the students to speak in different kinds of academic settings. There's the mock Constitutional Convention, which is a formal debate format. There are small-group discussions and pair work. In addition to that, students also role-play dialogues that they wrote. So what I was looking for was a development in the students' language in different types of academic settings, as well as their ability to take an experience like the mock Constitutional Convention, and write about it in a way to explain it to somebody else.

In this class the students are actually going to apply their knowledge of the Bill of Rights to real-life situations. So they've already read the Bill of Rights, paraphrased the Bill of Rights, and now I'm going to ask them to read six different situations and apply their knowledge to assess kind of what's going on in terms of the Bill of Rights, what amendment would actually have a bearing on the situation.

**Sarim:** Um, how about . . . .

**Michael:** It doesn't say that here.

**Sarim:** I know. It doesn't say that the—no, they did say it. You see, right here. And there's what? Okay. Authorities approach him at his home and present him with a search warrant.

**Michael:** Oh.

**Sarim:** They caught him, right? But, um. . . .

**Michael:** . . . Only with cause.

**Sarim:** That is a cause. They want to search for drugs, right?

**Deborah R.:** What was so interesting about the pair is that she continually asked him for confirmation

of what she was thinking or doing, and they were both going back to the text to confirm the assertions they were making. But when it came to the language of actually putting it into writing, they were both relatively stumped. And actually were trying to work through it together, but ended up calling me over to work through it. And at that point Sarim stopped being the teacher and Michael took over and reported back to me. So, it shows that the power that the students have to teach one another.

**Sarim:** Um, Anthony Morgan—it should say Anthony Morgan is a drug dealer, and the police want to check his home for drugs.

**Michael:** With a search warrant.

**Sarim:** With a search warrant. And then you put the fourth [?] amendment give the police the right to search his home with the warrant.

**Michael:** With the warrant. And the police search the place for whatever is being searched for.

**Sarim:** Oh! Maybe you should put this right here. 'Cause it just talking about, 'cause it say, "Decide which of the amendments" and you have "to explain the point of law." What do they mean by point of law?

**Deborah R.:** My desire to have the kids use more academic language is something I think about for all the kids, but it's especially difficult or especially challenging for my English language learners. And so while it's a goal for all of the students, I think, when it comes to structuring it, in terms of supporting the kids, I think much more about my English language learners. And the reason I say that is many of them don't have the opportunity to speak academically or haven't had the opportunity to speak academically extensively either in English or in other settings, whether they be school settings or home settings. And in order for their language on all fronts to develop, I really feel that they—I need to give them the opportunity in class to speak more, using academic terms, doing academic tasks. So it is a goal for all but it doesn't look the same for all of them. And the structures have to be there to support all of them in the way that they can participate. And one of the things that I do at the beginning of the year is listen and watch what language kids choose to communicate in and whether it's socially or academically. Because I've noticed over the last few years that some of my students don't choose to use their native language in academics at all. You know English is their dominant language and they actually choose to speak, read, and write consistently in English. But, I have also observed other students who quite ably go back and forth from English to Khmai or English to Portuguese, and in fact in those situations I try to have those students in the same groups.

**Narrator:** Strategic practices for supporting standards-based learning include active learning and thematic units that connect content-area curricula.

**Cheryl Bo.:** I wanted them to eventually create a Revolutionary War or a Civil War newspaper. This particular lesson we were working on a Revolutionary War newspaper, but I think too often as teachers, we say to kids you need to do a Revolutionary War newspaper and assume they know what a newspaper is, or assume that they have the background, or understand the different parts of a newspaper. So, I attempted to have them, in this particular lesson, discover a newspaper. And that's especially helpful for my second language learners because I could explain it to them. And I could tell them what a news story is. I could tell them what a dateline is or a byline. But when they're discovering it themselves, and they see it, and they're actually going through the newspaper hands-on, and they're turning the page, and they're looking for these words, and they're figuring out why newspapers are important in their lives, and what they need them for. It just makes much more sense to me for them to figure it out and have me there as a resource.

**Student:** We need them to know the weather.

**Student:** To know the weather. Just in case we need to go somewhere.

**Student:** Yeah, to be prepared.

**Student:** Yeah, local weather, right?

**Student:** To be prepared for severe weather.

**Student:** It tells you what happened in your town, like if someone got hurt. Like, they got the obituaries and stuff like you can find out like if someone got killed or hurt or was in the hospital or a car accident, it would go in the newspaper.

**Cheryl Bo.:** They are learning all different types of writing. Standards, the standards that we're using. They are learning to write editorial form. They are learning to write a newspaper. They are learning to be discriminating readers. They are focused on the standard English convention standard.

And they could see, finally, the use for some of the things that they had been learning. Once the kids had their list of what had—I gave them a rubric, and they had to have so many news stories, so many obituaries, so many job ads, so many store ads. Then—and they knew they had to have an index. They could set their newspaper up any way they wanted to as long as it resembled a real newspaper. And as you can see, the kids who are really good illustrators still had to write. There was writing with everything.

I feel like I'm very lucky to be working with a team, an integrated team where we work out units so the kids can learn content in different ways. I worked particularly closely with our social studies teacher on this newspaper unit. He told me which information in the social studies content lent itself more for news stories, which information was best to be done as editorials.

**Narrator:** In thematic units like this one, students can draw on background knowledge and language skills from more that one subject area to learn new information.

Another English language arts teacher plans her lessons to make sure that everyone, including English language learners, has the background for understanding each new activity. Here, her class is working on standards concerning literary genre and the elements of plot.

**Jolane R.:** What we're going to be doing today is using the same process that we used to do "The Sniper in the Back of the Room" and "The House of Dies Drear" to the stories that you wrote yourselves using the pictures in the literature book. Okay. We talked about the different elements of form. What's the most important one for you to think of when you start out? First thing you need to determine before you can do anything else here is . . . What is the . . . ?

**Student:** Setting.

**Jolane R.:** Setting, and the . . . ?

**Student:** Plot.

**(Multiple):** Plot.

**Jolane R.:** To get to the plot, though, what do you have to work through?

**(Multiple):** Conflict . . .

**Jolane R.:** The conflict. Remember everything about the plot you're going to be talking about in your groups in terms of what is the problem and how do we get from the point where it's introduced to . . .

**Student:** Where it's solved.

**Jolane R.:** Where it's solved. The resolution. Okay. And that's what you're going to be doing with one of the stories from your group. As you work it out you'll be charting it on the big piece of colored paper that you have. Okay. After this we'll do something else with what you've put on the paper and put that into paragraph form. But for right now, let's get some charts made. If you happen to finish one of your stories, you can get another piece of paper and move on to another story. Okay?

Well the lesson set up this particular day reverted back to what we had done on all the other days. It was something that they were very used to. The directions were almost verbatim from what they had had when we went through and did the same activity with

"The Sniper," what happened when we went through and did the same activity with "The House of Dies Drear." So that they had done this several times. We had models up in the classroom at the time. And now they were going to hear the same directions applied to their own stories, which is taking it to a little bit higher level. And I found that, from my work with second language students, that this scaffolding, this repetition, giving them something that they can be sure of, something they can count on, doing it the same way each time, gives them a hook that they can hang on to, that they can be sure of and have some success with.

**Student:** She wanted to know more about her birth mother.

**Student:** We have to find out where it hits the point.

**Student:** She didn't want her parents to know that . . .

**Student:** She was sad.

**Student:** Yeah, you know. 'Cause then they will feel sad, too.

**Student:** Yeah, I guess that would be the thing, right?

**Student:** And she kept on digging.

**Student:** And . . . kept . . .

**Student:** Kept on . . . on . . . on digging . . . and she found the necklace. The precious necklace.

**Jolane R.:** One thing that I've seen begin to happen more and more in my groups and in my classroom in the last two years is the use of native language. In the second group of girls that you see in this, they're going in and out of English and Spanish almost without thinking.

**Student:** No le llames todavia porque tenemos que deshacerlo.

**Student:** And they go home happy.

**Student:** And they went home happy.

**Student:** They went home happily ever after.

**Student:** Went.

**Student:** They went.

**Jolane R.:** And what I've discovered, and I've tried to encourage that without making it be, oh, you should be doing it, but to allow the students to feel comfortable doing that when they need to support each other, when someone doesn't get it and they need that additional explanation in the native language. And that makes all the difference sometimes.

Visuals are a very important piece. We had the model, both in the front of the room and the back of the room, that they could refer to, that I can point to and say this is exactly what we're talking about. So that it brings them back and helps to focus them on what it is that I'm asking them to do. And they also have had several graphic organizers in preparing the lesson along the way, that those visuals take them back to, because they used them in creating the plot diagrams and things that we're working with.

**Narrator:** Standards-based lessons helped these students develop a better understanding of plot structure.

**Jolane R.:** There's a different outcome for me because as I looked at it as a lesson, I was able to take a step back and say, what would I do different, as we've already talked about, and where do I go now from here. Can I take the next step that I had intended to take? Or do I need to back up? And I did need to back up before we were able to go forward.

**Slide:** **Standards and Assessment**

**Narrator:** Routinely assessing teaching and learning is essential to standards implementation. Integrating assessment into lessons helps teachers and students see growth and identify areas that need strengthening.

**Steve C.:** And today's "question du jour" is this—from all we've been reading, from the Harriet Tubman book, from what we heard from Sojourner Truth yesterday, and from what we saw last week when we were looking at *Roots* and discussing that—if you had been a slave on a plantation, knowing all the risks that were involved, would you have tried to escape on the Underground Railroad? Why or why not? So, knowing all that we do from the readings that we've done and the movie that we saw and the discussions that we had, knowing all the risks that were involved, would you try to escape on the Underground Railroad? Why or why not? All right. Any questions? All right.

I used to do the "question du jour" daily. As of late I haven't always been able to do that. I do try to get—if I don't get it at the beginning of the class—try to get it at the end of the class. It always pertains to some open-ended question, pertains to some sort of reading that we've done that day or some sort of discussion we've had that day during a particular lesson. I started using the "question du jour" because I felt with some kids they were a little bit inhibited about openly discussing things that were going on in stories or how they felt about things. So to get a good feel, to see if they were comprehending

what was going on in stories or what was going on in the class, if I could ask them an open-ended "question du jour" that I could read and see if they were getting the point.

**Narrator:** Assessment is one of the key issues for discussion in the study group.

**Cheryl Bo.:** The assessment piece always leaves me mystified. How do I really know that this child understood this? Because the child could follow the formula that I gave him? Or because the child can discuss it with me? How do I know that that child really understands that piece of instruction and that piece of curriculum? Sure, they can write a great newspaper. And then I say to them, "What's the difference between a Confederate soldier and a Union soldier?" And they look at me and say, "I don't know." But it's a great newspaper. This goes back to when I was teaching social studies. The assessment piece to me is still the most difficult part of the standards.

**Nancy C.:** How do you know when they know?

**Cheryl Bo.:** How do I know when they know.

**Nancy C.:** Umm hmm. I think that's a difficult part of instruction.

**Cheryl Bo.:** That's the most difficult part for me.

**Marney S.:** I think it has to be multiple ways. Multiple means—that you—by all those things.

**Cheryl Bo.:** So I won't be correcting papers every night for the rest of my natural life.

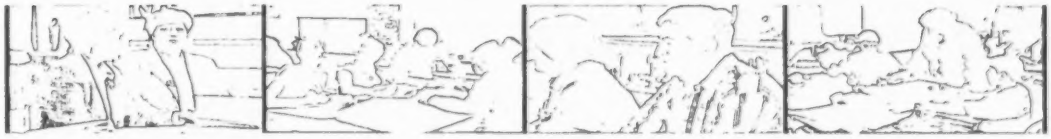
**Marney S.:** Right. So some of it is discussion. Some of it is listening to them. Some of it is performance. Some of it's what they do in class. Some of it's how they answer questions. Some of it's how they write. Some of it's how they did on the test. And if we make them inactive, we have even fewer methods of finding out what assessment is. The more active we make them, the more opportunity we have to see how much they do know.

**Eileen S.:** I think self-assessment for students, especially second language learners, is probably the most powerful tool you can use. When the student has a chance to look at what they can do and can tell you what they need to know how to do to get to the next place is, I think, a much more critical assessment than what a test score will show that student. And I think just like we need to look back at what we need to know, so do they. And I think, like you say, portfolios, students exhibiting their own work, students explaining their portfolios to parents and teachers, teacher conferencing with a new student that's transitioning—you know, what is it you're learning, what is it you need. I think those are the things that will make students grow.

**Narrator:** Implementing standards calls for deep thinking about the purposes and the consequences of professional practice. Working together with colleagues, these teachers reflect on their work and continue to refine their practice.

**Jolane R.:** But I think it's all part of a process. I mean, I'm thinking more about my teaching than I have ever done in my twenty-two years of teaching. And spending more time framing the lessons and going over them and saying, well, why am I doing this and what is it that I want the students to get out of this, and trying to make things more interconnected than I have ever done in my life.

**PART 1 ENDS**



## Video Part 2

### Standards-Based Teaching in Culturally Diverse Schools: Professional Development

**Narrator:** Making schools better is the fundamental goal of school reform. School reformers see standards as one important key. Standards have the potential to help culturally diverse schools serve all of their students well. To make sure that students reach these standards, schools often have to change the ways they work. Teachers need substantial professional development to help them translate the standards into practice.

**Nancy M.:** For years we've had consultants come in for two and three sessions and leave. And they come in and they don't know your children. They don't know you. They don't know your schools and your problems. But they come in and do their repertoire and leave. And then people go back to the status quo. Or maybe some people try a few things, but they go back to what they've been doing, and nothing changes. But with the type of thing we're starting now, where people are sitting, discussing, saying, "What do we need in our school for our kids?" That's going to work and keep going much further.

**Narrator:** To become familiar with the standards and figure out what they imply for classroom practice, teachers need long-term professional development. Working with their peers, teachers can interpret the standards and apply them to their own schools and classrooms. This study group of middle school teachers in Lowell, Massachusetts met twice a month for a year. Most of them had already been working on standards-based instruction for two years before that. You'll see them focusing on standards and reflecting on their teaching as they use three professional development strategies—standards analysis, examining student work, and discussing professional literature.

**Slide:** **Analyzing Standards**

**Narrator:** Working together in small groups and using a standards analysis tool, teachers scrutinize the standards at close range. They ask what concepts and skills each standard includes, what teaching strategies work best, and what assessment techniques reveal learning. Analyzing the standards is hard work. It raises questions about content and illuminates gaps in teacher knowledge as well as areas of expertise. Standards analysis involves interpretation and negotiation and leads teachers to important conversations.

**Jolane R.:** But I think one of the dangers also is when you look at just the standards as they're written.

**Cheryl A.:** Oh, no, you can't.

**Jolane R.:** They imply so much, and they mean so many things. And if we don't unpack them like this, we won't actually be able to say, "Am I doing it, or am I not?"

**Cheryl A.:** I don't disagree with that, Jolane.

**Cheryl A.:** Let's get down to the nuts and bolts. When you do that, you did your assignment or whether I do an assignment in social studies. You use your graphic organizer, and you explain and brainstorm and all that. I don't sit there and think—maybe I should, maybe this is my weakness—this is a concept or a skill to be learned, this is a teaching strategy. I just know what I want to do, what I want to use in order to get my final product. I think we spend, maybe we spend too much time, or do we need to sort this out, or maybe it depends on the person. For me, I don't want to even look at this. I just want to get to it.

**Marney S.:** But don't you think what you said, Jolane, earlier about you're really thinking about what you're doing is a result of trying to break it down task to task?

**Jolane R.:** I'm not trying to do task things like this exactly.

**Marney S.:** So that it has its value. I mean I think–

**Jolane R.:** I, we, I decide by myself before I start what it is I want the end product to be for the students, what I want them to come out of it with, and then back up and say, "And how am I going to get them there?"

**Marney S.:** It's hard to break it down and think of it in detail and think of as the part where we take one tiny step at a time. I think it's hard not to make assumptions, too, about what the kids already know.

**Jolane R.:** Part of what's missing is a lot of "What is the assessment?" I mean, you say, portfolios, but what do you mean by that? How are you going to assess them? Are you assessing the process? Are you assessing the final product?

**Marney S.:** And when do you let the kids in on it?

**Multiple:** Yeah.

**Marney S.:** I mean which part of it are you assessing? How they talk in a group? You know, all the other standards you could use as far as what . . . you know, they . . . you know, their final product, the . . . as you said, the process.

**Jolane R.:** And are you assessing all the steps along the way?

**Cheryl A.:** See, I think it should be . . . I think as we . . . 'cause this is new for us—unpacking the standards. I think we have to assess each step along the way.

**Narrator:** Unpacking the standards doesn't prescribe what will happen in classrooms: Instead, it helps teachers think critically about what they need to do in order to help their students meet the standards. Analyzing the standards raises issues and leads to planning new units and lessons, as well as revising familiar ones. Essentially, it means asking whether teaching promotes learning for every student.

**Slide:** **Examining Student Work**

**Narrator:** Another strategy for the study group is examining a piece of work to see what it suggests about the writer and the classroom. One of the group members brings copies of a student's work for the study group to read and discuss. After they've each read the work silently, the group members describe it, raise questions about it, and speculate about its meaning. Then they listen to the teacher who brought the work talk about it. Finally, the group reflects on the implications of their discussion for their own teaching. This strategy provides for nonjudgmental conversations where teachers trade perspectives and expertise.

**Valter D.:** We're going to describe the work. And I'm going to ask a question: What do you see? The answer cannot be judgmental. You can't add, it's not necessary to say, "I don't like" or "like," okay? And, what do you see this work?

**Hoa N.:** I see a lot of details and descriptions.

**Jolane R.:** And personification.

**Steve C.:** And sequencing.

**Deborah R.:** They could add transitional words of time —"after, when"—used appropriately.

**Valter D.:** Second part, you're going to raise questions. What questions does the work raise for you?

**Marney S.:** The use of voice. I wonder what instructions there were around the use of voice or personification.

**Deborah R.:** I'm curious if there were supposed to be a certain number of details pertaining directly to the Revolutionary period. Because this is social studies and language arts. Or is it a language arts' spin off of social studies?

**Valter D.:** So, there are two questions.

**Deborah R.:** Yeah.

**Steve C.:** I'd like to know how long it took to get a finished product.

**Nancy D.:** I would like to know if he's a second language learner.

**Nancy C.:** And if it is a second language learner, what their first language might be.

**Nancy M.:** It looks as if he's answering—I'm working on twenty-one and twenty-three, and what those standards are. And then also, down on number three, it looks as if maybe every time you ask what they have learned about themselves.

**Valter D.:** Self-evaluation.

Now my favorite part. Speculation. What do you think these students work on? And, uh, what standard?

**Cheryl A.:** I think they understood the time period, the Revolutionary time period from social studies. And then this writing was done in an English class. But, certainly with a lot of collaboration, I think, between the two. I'd like to know more about that. That part interests me.

**Deborah R.:** I would say that it's supposed to be, you know, bringing personification of a uniform. And that was the assignment. I find it difficult that kids would actually think of doing this . . . as a chosen piece. But . . . I'm not . . . I would assume that there was time spent, or the kids knew, what kinds of situations a uniform was supposed to be in. And maybe that is what came from the social studies part. Because there isn't a lot . . . there aren't a lot of details about specifics from the social studies class, but this piece obviously was written with knowledge of the time period.

**Marney S.:** I speculate that it is a second language learner, but I'm not sure . . . I don't know, I'm not sure I can guess which language they speak, his native tongue. I thought I had an idea, but I don't think I do.

**Hoa N.:** It seems like there's several people writing this because of different handwritings. Yet the tone of the piece is the same.

**Marney S.:** That's a good point.

**Hoa N.:** You know, and then it seemed like, like you had said, the student's self-evaluation . . . the writing is not as good as the writing piece, so I'm wondering whether they enjoy this piece better than this piece.

**Nancy C.:** What I'm speculating, just from what you're saying, is maybe they didn't take that last self-evaluation as seriously as the assignment.

**Deborah R.:** Or they haven't gotten as good at it yet. That they're just learning how to do self-evaluation, and it's truly just a lack of practice and skill in that. And so she's very brief and doesn't maybe say as much as we would expect given her piece.

**Valter D.:** And now we'd like to hear from the presenting teacher.

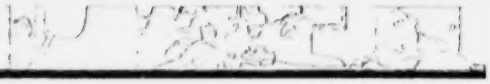
**Cheryl Bo.:** It is a second language learner. We found out, or I found out by accident, that the sixth-grade teacher had slated her for bilingual to go into the seventh grade, and she never went into seventh grade bilingual. She somehow just never got there. So she was put into a mainstream seventh grade, and then I got her, and she was having a lot of difficulty—a real lot of difficulty. And this assignment took five weeks. From beginning to end this is a five-week project. Yes, we did do lessons on personification. We had gone to see a play at U. Lowell called *The Wall*. They had to personify the wall. They did that writing piece about what it was like to have been the wall before they started this. They knew from the very beginning that this is what the assignment was going to be.

**Slide:** **Discussing Professional Literature**

**Narrator:** Another strategy for teacher study groups is discussing professional literature. Reading together helps build knowledge.

**Deborah R.:** You know, it's interesting. When—I must have read this chapter in a completely different frame of mind. Because all the notes that I took had to do with the first thing that I read. I think it was a quotation about "Policy studies should begin with a focus on where policy is applied, rather than policymakers' intentions." Which is a really interesting quotation because I thought it applied perfectly to teachers. That teaching studies or teaching should begin with a focus on where teaching is applied rather than on the teachers' intentions. So as I was reading the chapter, I kept picking things out that would actually put that into practice. Meaning that you respond to students and have flexibility. And also that the observation skills to see what kids really need and when they need it and how you would teach to what you see in students' work.

**Jolane R.:** And I think, what I was looking at it more was with our focus here on the bilingual students, so much of what they're talking about here in this chapter is what we've been talking about: what we need to be able to do to help these kids succeed along the



way—the flexibility, the response to where they are, what they're bringing for prior knowledge, and things like that, along the way. And I think, you know, I was responding to the testing idea, but that was the way I approached this chapter. And that's why it had me very excited, because it was very much along the lines that we're going at here.

**Cheryl Bo.:** And even when you start, I mean, looking at a district that does their curriculum day-by-day or week-by-week. I mean, as flexible as we are ... okay, some of us are really flexible. And you sit down and you make lesson plans, and you build in the flexibility. And that lesson, or that plan, takes you someplace you never ever planned to go. And it's the kids who take you there. And how could you not do that?

**Marney S.:** They have in here a comment about the two impulses going on with reform, which is the two competing theories. And that I do hear. One to me is a reaction to fear. You know, you pull in. You tighten the controls. You test teachers. You test kids. You figure out what's going on. You know, accountability, we'll figure it out. What's the bottom dollar? Which is a business perspective: What's the bottom dollar? How much are they actually doing? Some of it I don't really object to. I don't really mind finding out in a national sense, well, how are we doing, how are the kids doing. You know, some of the—some of the MCAS results are enlightening. You know, the math scores aren't very good. So, I mean, some things are ... we should know them. But the other reaction, which is much more supportive of teachers, the other theme, the other theory, which is ... in here they call it "build local capacity through stronger teacher education and development of schools as inquiring collaborative organizations." Which is a lot what we're doing here. That takes a certain amount of trust.

**Slide:** **Supporting Professional Development**

**Narrator:** Making time for discussing standards-based teaching requires real commitment from teachers and administrators. Study groups need to meet frequently throughout the year. And teachers need to come together across programs to establish a broad base of knowledge about the content area, language development, and pedagogy. Study groups can support real professional growth, but administrative support is essential.

**Eileen S.:** How can we get administrators to see the value of teachers talking, sharing, and moving. I'm just afraid with test results all coming out and from what I can hear that there's going to be more "less talk," and more "less doing the talk and more doing the walk." And it's going to maybe even hinder some of the way we've moved that way.

**?:** I don't know that that...

**Eileen S.:** So how can we bring this back?

**Valter D.:** It's important to share ideas and to work together professional. It's a challenge to us for the future.

**Hoa N.:** I think sharing ideas across the school system is really a good idea, and what we're doing here, because you get to see what other schools are doing. Whereas if you just leave it in your school, then you think that's the way it is for every other school.

**Nancy C.:** Within this group there are four schools that are represented. And it is interesting to hear the different comments and I keep going back to that same question. Wherever your school is on that continuum of no support at all to all kinds of support—wherever you are on that continuum, how do you get more? How do you keep moving to where it's . . .

**Cheryl Bo.:** I think you have to find at least one other, and we were doing this when we were doing the citywide thing, I mean, how do you get teachers and administrators to understand? Maybe show them this video. For starters. But if you could get one other person or two other people in the building to buy into everything we're doing at this table . . . Like Steve said, at the beginning of the year there was a breakfast club with a few people, and then they ended up with fifteen. It only takes two or three in each building to get it going. And if you're in a building where there's not two or three people I say get out. I mean—that's scary!

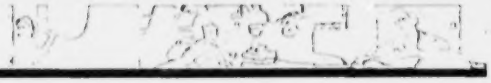
**Nancy C.:** One of the findings from the first year of working with all of you was that we have documented to see that there were ESL teachers that had not had experience in mainstream classrooms. There were some mainstream teachers that had not had experience in bilingual classrooms, etc., etc. And one of the things that we found was that some of the mainstream teachers stopped complaining about bilingual programs when they began to realize that, "Hey, wait a minute, bilingual teachers are teaching all subject areas," which they hadn't known before. And bilingual teachers were beginning to get a better sense of, "Wow, the mainstream curriculum is really demanding and mainstream classrooms are not homogenous groups of kids." So . . .

**Cheryl Bo.:** And even in the third year, a couple of weeks ago, when we were here, I said to Cheryl. She said something, we were talking about classrooms, and I said something to Cheryl about, "Well, do you want to trade? You've only got twelve kids." And Deborah said, "Uh uh!" So I mean, even now, sometimes, we're not conscious of the difficulties. Thank you, Deborah.

**Deborah R.:** You're welcome, Cheryl.

**Cheryl Br.:** Thank you, Deborah.

**Deborah R.:** My pleasure.



**Cheryl Bo.:** But it's true. You forget. You know, I mean, you get so overwhelmed with what you think is important that you forget what other people are facing every day in a different setting.

**Marney S.:** I was just sort of chuckling over here because being—going into a lot of people's classrooms, everybody takes me aside and says, "I have the worst class."

(laughter)

**Jolane R.:** I think we also need to continue to seek out the types of conversations that we've had. Just because you've found a good way to do it, or it worked with one particular class, doesn't mean that you're always going to do it that way. It's going to be a different group of kids. It's going to be a different class next period. That it may go completely different. And I think in addition to the trust, the reflection and the engaging in the professional conversations and continuing almost to develop the types of relationships that we've developed here, where we can sort of challenge each other to go one step further and to do more, is so important to continuing to develop and not just stagnating as I know—I can speak for myself—I did for a long time.

**Cheryl Bo.:** I think you have to get comfortable. I mean, I think that the only way any of us can become better teachers is to get comfortable with a challenge being a positive thing, and not sitting up and putting your shoulders back when somebody says to me, "Why did you do it like that? Why are you doing that lesson that way? Why are those kids in those groups?" Those are good questions, and I think too many of us—and especially before we got here—would think of that as a negative challenge instead of a positive way for us to look at what we're doing.

**PART 2 ENDS**

# GUIDELINES FOR STARTING A STUDY GROUP

## Study Groups

Study groups offer a democratic approach to professional development. They provide sustained opportunities for teachers to work together to explore issues and challenges that have direct impact on their professional lives and the lives of their students. A radical shift from traditional professional development efforts, study groups require that teachers create and use knowledge, not merely receive it (Clair, 1998).

### Guidelines for Study Groups in Culturally Diverse Schools

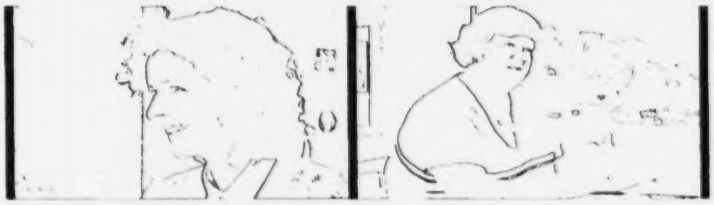
- Groups include 6 to 12 members.
- Groups meet frequently (e.g., twice a month for 2 hours).
- Groups are open to all teachers. They include bilingual program, content-area, ESL, and special education teachers.
- Membership in the group is voluntary, but strong incentives are offered.
- To help members make the transition from traditional professional development experiences, initial study group meetings focus on developing group norms and discussing expectations.
- Leadership and accountability are shared, and sessions are interactive. All members are responsible for preparing for meetings, attending each one, contributing to activities, and taking turns facilitating the work.
- Group process is democratic. Group members are responsible for voicing concerns and proposing solutions.
- Group members build knowledge of educational linguistics (the role of language in teaching and learning), second language acquisition, assessing students' learning, diversifying instruction, and other topics of local interest by reading and discussing literature based in research and exploring its relevance to the local context. Group members define areas for which they need to contract outside professional development providers.
- The group uses sustainable learning strategies that are tied to essential dimensions of appropriate instruction for diverse students. Productive strategies include, but are not limited to, examining student work, carefully observing classroom practice, and reading and discussing professional literature.[2]

Adapted from Clair, N. (2001). *Why reading is hard: Viewers guide.* McHenry, IL, and Washington, DC: Delta Systems Co., Inc. and Center for Applied Linguistics.

[2] Resources for Further Study lists materials on professional development that may suggest other strategies.

## TEACHERS' REFLECTIONS: CHANGES IN PRACTICE

### Two Teachers' Perspectives on Implementing Standards in Culturally Diverse Schools



**Deborah Romeo and Jolane Roy**
**Lowell, Massachusetts Public Schools**

# Implementing standards is

neither a mechanical task nor an easy one. Rather, it is a process that depends on teachers' commitment and hard work to improve the schools in which they work. As core participants in 3 years of a standards implementation project, we present two perspectives on this experience. The first is a historical description of the project in which we both were involved. The second is personal: We represent our experiences as individuals engaged in building professional expertise. Neither perspective is complete by itself. What happened in the project changed us as teachers, and what happened to us as individuals made the project worth talking about.

## A Project History

When the standards implementation project was proposed in 1996, the Lowell, Massachusetts School District was preparing to implement state standards by developing curriculum frameworks. Under the leadership of the director of Title I programs, the school district collaborated with the LAB to initiate a joint research and development project on implementation of high learning standards with English language learners (ELLs).

The project was a complex undertaking committed from the outset to true partnership: Practitioners contributed both to planning the project and to analyzing what was being learned. Thus, the project remained directly related to the needs of those involved. As research, the project was breaking new ground by looking at standards implementation with second language learners and the professional development necessary to support such an initiative. Study of the issues that arose when teachers implemented standards informed the emerging professional development approach.

In this district, second language learners have been a significant presence. A historic mill city in northeastern Massachusetts, Lowell was home to approximately 105,000 residents in 1996, many of linguistically and culturally diverse backgrounds. Of the 16,000 students in the Lowell Public Schools, approximately 65% were ELLs. Transitional bilingual education services, which reached 25% of the student population, were offered in Spanish, Portuguese, Vietnamese, Laotian, and Khmai. English language learners who spoke other languages received ESL services from a pool of 13 tutors. The rest of the students met in mainstream classes with teachers whose mean age was in the 40s and whose preservice training—depending on years of service—had not necessarily included strategies to meet the educational needs of ELLs.

The LAB/Lowell project team identified four collaborating middle schools. In the project's first year, 31 practitioners participated, based on teaching assignments. They included teachers of bilingual education, ESL, mainstream English language arts, and Title 1 reading, as well as citywide facilitators from Title 1, Title 7, and Chapter 636 (Commonwealth of Massachusetts Equity and Integration Funds)

programs. In two cohorts, participants met with three LAB researchers at the district's central office for full-day sessions each month. This amounted to a total of 48 hours of professional development for each participant.

Sessions explored the concept of standards and their place in both national and local reform, second language acquisition theory and research, and practical implications of standards for mainstream classrooms—especially instructional strategies supporting ELLs' growth in both language and academic proficiency. Teachers read and discussed articles and recorded reflections in journals as the process of building a common professional knowledge base unfolded (Clair & Adger, 2000). The sessions sometimes varied across the cohorts as the LAB personnel tailored the content to the needs and knowledge base of the individuals in each group. The researchers also visited the schools and the classes of willing teachers each month and made detailed field notes. These focused visits enabled the "insiders" and "outsiders" to engage in conversations that were grounded in the reality of daily classroom experience and connected to the knowledge being constructed in the full-day sessions.

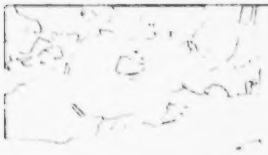
At the end of this year of building relationships and foundational knowledge, participants and researchers from both cohorts met to evaluate the process and plan for the second project year. Most teachers felt strongly that they would like the sessions to take place after school in their individual buildings and include more of their peers. During the project's second year, 63 teachers met in their four schools for 2 hours each month in after-school sessions geared to the school's priorities. One group decided to explore standards implementation through action research. In the other three schools, teachers selected a language arts standard, analyzed its implications for instruction and assessment, and discussed their experiences in implementing it. The groups practiced two sustainable strategies for teacher development: standards analysis and examining student work. Participants read articles and discussed them in groups. Classroom visits continued, but on a limited basis due to the larger number of participants and reduced number of researchers (two). Teachers also were trained in a protocol for peer visitation and visited each other's classes to see standards implementation in action.

In the third year, the project team selected 15 teacher leaders to participate in after-school study group sessions with the two LAB researchers twice a month. The number was limited due to the nature of the work that year. The team wanted to produce videos to document standards implementation in culturally diverse schools and a professional development approach to support it. Study group partici-

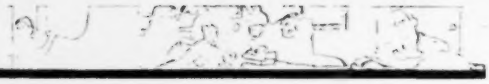
pants gathered evidence of standards implementation that purposely considered the needs of second language learners. They practiced the sustainable strategies introduced in year two: standards analysis and examining student work. They also read and discussed articles and a book, *The Right to Learn* by Linda Darling-Hammond (1997). They began to share what they were learning by participating in presentations to district administrators and at conferences with the LAB staff. The sustainable strategies became the basis for the early implementation of content-area study groups back in their individual schools.

Although the project was technically complete after the third year, some participants continued the group's work by spreading the word about project activities that had been most effective and valuable for them. They presented at conferences, wrote about their experiences for publication, led study groups in their own schools, took graduate classes, taught college courses, pursued National Board Certification, became involved with developing the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) test, and contributed to the production of the project videos. Several even formed a new study group to continue to do professional reading together.

## Reflections on the First Three Years



For practitioners who were committed to this project from its inception, the experience produced a broad range of feelings and learning. In the past, participation in professional development programs had been hit-or-miss at best, and fractured and ineffectual most often. But in 1996 when the project began, schools and teachers were feeling pressured to participate in professional development due to policy changes, especially the impending adoption of the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks and the MCAS test—which all students, including ELLs, would have to pass in order to receive high school diplomas. Although some teachers perceived these mandates as an attack on their professionalism, knowledge, and skills, most acknowledged the need for professional development that would address the new policies, including the need to ensure success for all students. However, the 990-hour "time



on learning" requirement of the Massachusetts Educational Reform Act had led to the elimination of monthly early-release professional development days within the district. Participation in unpaid after-school programs was not encouraged, and funds for meaningful long-term programs were limited. Because of these factors, the opportunity to embark on this 3-year professional development project with the LAB was attractive to the school and district staff.

**Year one**. The project introduced a new professional development approach to build teachers' capacity for implementing content standards with all students, including ELLs, an approach that engaged teachers in knowledge production. This presented a challenge for both the participants and the researchers. Researchers were asking teachers to reflect critically and converse about their own instructional practices and beliefs about education. The researchers even posed questions to which there were no ready-made answers. This new approach contrasted starkly with previous professional development experiences that had purported to provide answers. Instead, teachers were asked to look at themselves and their instructional practices first, rather than at what was the matter with the students. Teachers—whose participation had been mandated by the district—felt uncomfortable and at risk in this demanding structure.

The professional conversations in these sessions were often difficult also because teachers had had little practice discussing basic beliefs about second language learners and instructional practices that support them. They brought to this process personal prejudices, misconceptions, and different levels of knowledge regarding second language learners. Some questioned the ability of second language learners to meet the standards and even the point of instituting standards.

The fact that participation had been mandated led to varied levels of commitment and degrees of openness, creating difficulties in the ongoing work of the project. As teachers were pulled out of school for the first-year immersion phase of the project, other staff members at their schools came to view the program as elitist and became critical of participants. Many participants resented being pulled away from their classrooms. The researchers were under scrutiny due to their outsider status and their repeated visits to classrooms and schools. There was limited trust and understanding as to what their role truly was. Because this type of long-term professional development was new, even the administrators were unsure of how to deal with the researchers. They wondered, justifiably, what school-wide benefit would be gained from teachers' participation in the project.

In spite of these problems and differences in group make-up and researcher-identified needs, the first year ended successfully. With time, most teachers had learned to engage in professional conversations about the issues facing them in regard to second language acquisition and standards implementation. Negative perceptions of other staff members—difficult while they lasted—eventually dissipated. The researchers and participants had established trusting relationships. Teachers had received much-needed personal professional attention during the researchers' visits to individual classrooms. Attitudes toward observations had modified: No longer were they viewed as a dreaded evaluation tool; now they were a welcomed source of support. In discussions following the visits, researchers had validated teachers and their practices, while modeling reflection on teaching. As a result, we, as teachers, had learned how to evaluate ourselves and our instructional practices in light of our current student population. Coupled with this individual experience was the intensive group educational process focused on standards implementation for second language learners. The new knowledge served as the critical lens for self-evaluation. This soul-searching process led many of the participants in that first year of the project to believe that we could be better teachers. While this realization may appear basic, it was so powerful that it fundamentally changed our self-perception and increased our commitment to the success of all our students.

**Year two**. With the second project year came the challenge of integrating new participants into the core group continuing from year one. Due to the lack of common experience and education, we once again had to get past the old expectations of just-give-me-the-answer professional development. Also, with the increased numbers involved in the project, it was nearly impossible for the researchers to continue to provide the level of individual classroom contact that had proved so valuable. During this year, participants were often disappointed and questioned the project's direction. As core teachers deeply involved from the beginning, we often felt isolated from the new participants, frustrated, and unclear about our roles in the groups. Given the experiences of the first year, we thought that we could make a valuable contribution and felt an obligation to play an active role in the sessions; on the other hand, we were well aware that each of us was "just another teacher," and we were unsure how our input would be accepted by our colleagues. We were not yet ready to take the risk of assuming leadership in the group.

Because we wanted to continue where we had left off in the first year, rather than starting over with the new participants, we initiated ongoing conversations with the researchers outside our group sessions. Although this could have been perceived as exclusionary, these discussions allowed us to link

our prior experiences in the core group to those of our new school group. They were what we core teachers needed at this point in our professional development.

Although it was laced with frustrations, the second year would prove to be an important step in our growth. We grappled more deeply with questions such as, What do I believe about standards and second language learners? How can I integrate what I've learned in my classroom with what I've learned in the project? How can I share this experience with other colleagues in my school community?

During the year, the project emphasis shifted from building a knowledge base and relationships to shaping classroom practice, with special attention devoted to sustainable strategies for professional development. One such strategy, analyzing student work, provided the focus that teachers needed to converse objectively and comfortably about students' writing in light of standards. Perhaps more important, preconceptions and expectations for second language learners were discussed based on evidence from student work. This opened our eyes to what ELLs could do, as opposed to what they couldn't do. Gradually, teachers began to see that standards could be discussed in relation to all students. This realization opened the door to the standards analysis process that involved discussing content without individualizing it.

Relationships within and among schools were fostered during that second year through another sustainable strategy, voluntary peer visitation. Being in other schools, seeing good teaching, and seeing teachers dealing with similar problems and frustrations stimulated our thinking about our own teaching and added another dimension to the group's relationships. Notably, core participants—those continuing from the first year—tended to visit the classes of core participants from other schools. Some problems did arise due to the day-to-day unpredictability of public middle school life: the lack of substitutes, emergency situations, and conflicting priorities in individual schools. Post-visitation follow-ups were difficult because of conflicting schedules and lack of experience with the process. The benefits from the peer visitations were incremental but telling. These visits played an important role in forging stronger bonds among this core group.

Overall, the benefits of the second year were different for the new participants than for those from the original group. The new participants gained knowledge about standards and about instruction for ELLs. The original participants benefited from the longer exposure to standards implementation

with second language learners and also from the richness of the conversations that had developed over time. All agreed that the cross-grade communication and curricular planning that went on that year were necessary elements of an effective standards-based approach to student learning. Many new participants could not continue in year three because of the modified structure of the project. However, their commitment to project goals continued to manifest itself in their schools: planning standards-based curriculum, playing vocal roles in content-area study groups, and assuming leadership roles within their buildings. This involvement contrasts with the inaction of those first year participants who chose not to continue in the second year.

**Year three**. We entered the project's third year with high hopes for collaboration with our peers and for improving our classroom instruction, as well as more than a little trepidation regarding the videotaping planned for our classrooms. But we were willing to risk being videotaped because we were committed to the group and the project goals. The group quickly became quite cohesive and trusting, defined by concern for kids and teaching. There was a clear sense of mutual responsibility as learners and professionals. We expected a lot from each other, and each of us became a role model for the others.

At the same time, it became apparent that core participants—those who had been with the project since its inception—were ready to assume leadership roles in the group and in our schools. We believed that we had a foundation from which to proceed in a positive direction. We were confident that we were better at addressing the needs of our second language learners. Our fear of the standards had dissipated. Our challenge was to use and share what we had learned. It was our turn to carry on as leaders in the movement toward implementing high learning standards for all students. The question became how best to do that. Despite our enthusiasm, we found that avenues for effecting change within our schools were unclear. Nevertheless, as we grew more vocal about our beliefs and classroom practices in the group, we realized that we didn't need to apologize for our successes when communicating with our colleagues in our schools. With this realization came the strength to promote good classroom practice by sharing what we had learned and successfully implemented in our classrooms.

## Realizations After the Project

At this writing one year after the project's close, we are struck by how far we have come and how far we have yet to go individually and as members of a community of teachers. We see the life-changing impact of this project on us as professionals.

**The impact of understanding standards and second language learners**. We have learned a great deal about content standards that define what children need to know and be able to do. Standards can describe a high-quality product, direct learning for all children, and focus teachers and students on important content (Center for Resource Management, n.d.). As teachers, we have had to retrain ourselves to focus first on the skills and concepts outlined in our state curriculum frameworks in order to fully comprehend what will be expected of our students. Through the process of standards analysis conducted in our study group, we have learned that we can agree on the legitimacy of the standards and the benefit of standards-based instruction for our students.

We have realized that we need a variety of instructional strategies to support our students in a learning environment based on explicit standards. Our instruction has become more purposeful: We have matched our instructional strategies to the needs of our students and the content we are teaching. One of the most important things that we have learned, as teachers in an environment where at least 65% of students are ELLs, is the importance of replacing incorrect preconceptions with research-based knowledge. The reality is that children learn languages in different ways, and the process is neither quick nor easy. Common assumptions about language learning, such as that children are superior language learners, are often mistaken and can result in unrealistic expectations and ineffective instruction. We have also come to understand the roles of native language use, ESL classes, and mainstream instruction in the language acquisition process of our students. Finally, we have consciously used this information in planning for instruction and assessment.

In addressing the question, What do second language learners need to know in order to succeed in mainstream academic settings?, we have come to understand how complex the answer is. Language

learning is a lifelong process. It is much more than the acquisition of social conversation skills: English language learners need to develop academic language proficiency (Cummins, 1984). Students need comprehensive linguistic competence: knowledge of the grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and pragmatics of English. They need to use their linguistic competence in both social and academic interaction. While they are developing linguistic competence, they need access to grade-level curriculum, materials, and instruction. To succeed, they need to draw on all their language skills—reading, writing, speaking, and listening—in their native languages and in English. The true challenge of standards for second language learners is demonstrating the acquisition of content and skills in a language and culture that isn't their own. Understanding this has caused us to reevaluate our planning, instruction, and assessment.

**The impact of increased reflection**. Careful, ongoing self-assessment has become part of our teaching lives. Our growth as reflective teachers happened as a result of a variety of experiences. Through peer visitation, videotaping, journal writing, and other learning strategies that the project introduced, we have learned how to gather evidence from our classrooms and use it as a basis for reflection about teaching and learning. Scrutinizing our own students' work to evaluate our instructional effectiveness, we have learned to identify what worked instructionally and what didn't and then make appropriate improvements. Our instruction is now more diagnostic and individualized. By conceiving of students' work as evidence of acquired skills rather than deficiencies alone, we have learned to use our insights to design whole-class and small-group instruction. This approach runs counter to the planning processes we used previously, which assumed a textbook-based sequence of skill development. In essence, using the student work protocol has focused our instruction, thereby increasing its effectiveness.

Our classrooms have changed as a result of our becoming more reflective. Some of the most notable changes are the creation of an independent reading program, including sustained silent reading; the increased use of cooperative learning in both English and native languages; and the inclusion of students in their own assessments. In each case, students are taking a measure of control over their own learning while receiving the support they need. We realize now that the myths that we believed about inner-city second language learners are just that: myths. Our students will set their own goals, read independently, write multiple drafts, assess themselves, and provide us with valuable feedback if we teach them to do so and show them that we believe in them.

**The impact of long-term, sustained professional development**. There has been a fundamental shift in our beliefs about our responsibility to continue to grow and learn as teachers. In the past, individual professional development was rarely pursued or encouraged on a large scale. Teachers were certified for life. Engaging in continuing education—as nurses, lawyers, and doctors do—was not considered a necessity. However, education reform in Massachusetts, which mirrors the national situation, changed all that, instituting 5-year recertification cycles. *The Recertification Guidelines for Massachusetts Educators* state that all teachers "must engage in sustained professional development that strengthens professional knowledge and skills" (Massachusetts Department of Education, January, 2000). We wholeheartedly support this position because we have lived it and seen its impact on our teaching and our students' learning, and on the vision for professional development within our schools.

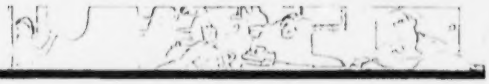
This project has provided a model for sustainable professional development that could be adopted in individual schools. Many of the teachers who joined the project in its second year now participate in school-based study groups. Their experience with the project laid the groundwork for successful school-based collaboration. Strategies practiced in the project (standards analysis, examining student work, peer visitation, and reading and discussing professional literature) provided a focus for teachers who were just learning to work together and a springboard for the discussion of teaching and learning. Often conversations that opened with questions or frustrations ended with sharing and assessment of teaching strategies. As a result of this collaborative problem solving, participants in school-based study groups have added to their instructional "bag of tricks." They feel better prepared to provide instruction that is appropriate for their students and grounded in solid research and instructional theory.

An unexpected outcome of the school-based study groups has been increased participation in the shared decision-making process necessitated by the state-mandated school improvement plans. As a result of having a forum in which to discuss the educational needs of their students, the standards, and the MCAS, teachers have become more invested in solving the problems they face. They are asking the questions, How do I improve student learning? and What do I need, as a teacher, to effect that improvement? Working together, teachers are determining their own professional development needs and forging a focused, school-wide approach to professional development that targets the needs of their students.

This new school-based approach to professional development capitalizes on the expertise available in our buildings and school district. We also realize that there is a place for outside consultants and other professional development providers. The need for outside assistance emerges as teachers work together to solve problems related to curriculum, instruction, and assessment within the reality of our own teaching environments. We have learned that when it involved outsiders, "effective professional development must be a two-way process, with both parties--the outside technical assistance providers and the teachers—bringing knowledge to the sessions and learning from one another" (Clair, Adger, Short, & Millen, 1998, p. 27).

**The impact of empowering teachers**. As a result of our participation in this project, we find ourselves increasingly committed to the risk-filled process of education reform. We realize that change can't happen unless teachers become involved in the problem-solving process that makes reform possible. Several pieces are crucial to any reform effort in any school. First, teachers must be advocates for the children they teach. Our children can learn, and it is our responsibility to provide them with the tools to make learning possible. Second, we must determine what we need in order to meet the needs of our students. We need to recognize and draw on the professional knowledge and experience of our colleagues and still realize when we need assistance from outsiders. We're responsible for following through on our individual professional development plans and consciously seeking out the resources to meet our needs.

Since the project ended, we have sought out opportunities to continue our own learning while sharing what we have learned with our colleagues. Within our own schools, and with the support of our district, we have participated in forming and facilitating cross-grade, content-specific study groups. The study groups have become the focus and driving force for school-based education reform. Recognizing the need for continued collaboration after the project's end, participants formed a professional reading discussion group. We have ventured beyond our own schools to demonstrate the sustainable strategies used in this long-term professional development approach in several venues: district-wide leadership meetings; the annual meetings of the Massachusetts Association of Bilingual Educators, New York Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (NYTESOL), and Northern New England TESOL; and a series for the Massachusetts Association of Teachers of Speakers of Other Languages. Individually, we have embarked on different courses of self-improvement including, but not limited to, graduate study, National Board for Professional Teaching Standard Certification, and membership on the Assessment Development Committee for the MCAS.



Over the past two years, we have sometimes felt overwhelmed as we have taken the risk of leaving our safe havens, our classrooms. Despite our reservations, we have felt compelled to continue the work of this project and to share with others what we have learned. We have realized that the process of change in our profession is not easy, quick, or clear; it requires a huge commitment of time, patience, and energy. There is no end to the process, and progress must sometimes be measured in inches.

We still feel the same uncertainty and optimism that we had at the end of the project a year ago. But we have committed ourselves to the process of education reform and standards implementation with second language learners. We welcome the challenges that still face us as we work to improve our teaching and our students' learning, for, as the video shows, that's what it all comes down to.

## A New Approach to Professional Development

**Cheryl Athanas**
**Lowell, Massachusetts Public Schools**

# The school reform movement

asks that schools become places of excellence for all students. We all realize that the responsibility for improving our schools is shared among administrators, teachers, parents, and students. But as a social studies teacher facing a diverse classroom, I find that school reform presents a tremendous challenge for me. My college background did not prepare me to teach a culturally diverse group of students, and this is the case for many teachers. Yet these students are now the majority in my classroom. As a result, I need professional development experiences that focus on school reform in culturally and linguistically diverse schools.

In the past, I attended many professional workshops that featured a consultant giving teachers a "quick fix" for the challenges we face. In contrast, the LAB project's approach to professional development is teacher-centered: It builds on what teachers bring to the table. It provides time for professional teacher talk. This experience has given me an opportunity to set new goals for my own education as a teacher.

As a teacher of English language learners (ELLs), I need not only to learn more about teaching ELLs but also to understand my own attitudes and beliefs about the languages and ethnicities of my ELLs. To be honest, in the past I often felt that students with limited English proficiency were also limited in academic skills. I was always trying to play catch up. A quick-fix workshop was not the answer!

For me, the answer was building professional relationships with ESL, bilingual, and other content-area teachers, as well as with outsiders to the school district. I needed time with other professionals to get help. Meeting repeatedly with teachers from my school and other schools in Lowell made the difference. I began to see a light at the end of the tunnel: I would be a better teacher by being a better learner.

Important features of this new approach to professional development are that it is sustained and frequent. I have attended many excellent workshops, but none have been sustained over time. While I received information, they usually didn't present the opportunity to share what worked or didn't work in my classroom. I have always felt that this was a weakness. As I met with teachers and other professionals over time in this project, I realized that we were becoming better teachers because we were learning so much about teaching from each other and from our reading. This process of sharing must be sustained and frequent if teachers are truly going to learn and grow.

When professional development is emergent, reciprocal, and adaptable to local realities, everyone gets something out of it. I have learned and will continue to learn to be a more effective teacher, benefiting all my students, because this approach to professional development is linked to the essential elements of my work: curriculum, instruction, and assessment of student learning. As a result, my students are now writing with more specific goals. The entire eighth-grade team now has identified specific skills for writing across the curriculum. I spend more time focusing on instruction of these skills in my classroom, and the team spends more time assessing student work. In addition, the bilingual teachers reinforce these specific skills for writing across the curriculum so that the bilingual students are better prepared when they enter my classroom. As a result, my eighth-grade students' writing skills have greatly improved.

This new kind of professional development takes a problem-solving approach. Instead of accepting the new standards at face value, we asked questions about them. We unwrapped them to see what they included and what they meant for teaching, and we used them to look at student work in structured professional conversations. We reflected together on what students' work suggests about teaching. I have introduced the strategy of examining student work to my eighth-grade team and my social studies study group. When this activity is sustained and frequent, teachers can solve problems and learn together.

In addition, for the first time, I have learned to apply research-based knowledge through this project. In reading and discussing *The Right to Learn* by Linda Darling-Hammond, I always came away from the table energized, hopeful, and ready to start the next day with a more positive attitude. After the organized professional development experience ended, I missed those discussions. Fortunately, a few teachers involved in the project agreed to meet on our own and read and discuss another book.

Instead of feeling like I am sinking under constant new demands, I now have not only the strength but also new skills to meet the challenges of the classroom. To all administrators and teachers, I say that teachers will have the skills to meet the challenges of culturally diverse classrooms when we have professional development that allows us to take ownership of our learning process. Both administrators and teachers must realize that this kind of professional development takes time but that it benefits the students—not only my second language learners, but all of them.

## Reflections on Professional Comfort

**Cheryl Boss**
**Lowell, Massachusetts Public Schools**

# When I returned to teaching

after an 18-year hiatus to raise my three children, I experienced cultural and professional shock. Although I was a mature, experienced, and creative teacher with excellent classroom management skills, I had no experience in an urban school district, working with English language learners (ELLs). I couldn't even pronounce my students' Cambodian, Vietnamese, or Laotian names. Things were so bad that I couldn't even figure out what I didn't know.

Over the course of my first year back, I somehow managed to survive, and, in the process, I discovered that most of my students were eager to learn and were looking to me to help them. I did my best, but it was not enough. I knew they deserved an academic life that was not a constant uphill battle. They needed to develop proficiency in English as well as academic skills. Many of them were also dealing with difficult economic, cultural, and family issues. The students were never far from my mind. What could I do to make a difference in their academic lives?

I did what I do best: I entered a whirlwind of activities. I joined standards committees on both the school district and state levels. I helped rewrite the Lowell Curriculum Guides based on the new Massachusetts Frameworks. I corrected long compositions written during administration of the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) and sought out what I needed to know to help my kids. I learned a lot, but I felt like I was spinning out of control. About the time I realized that I

hadn't moved very far toward helping my ELL students, I was asked to participate in the LAB project. My first thought was, "Great! Another random workshop that will take up more of my precious time." I could not have been more wrong! At a time when my frustration was intense, this project provided the opportunity to participate in timely, stimulating, and challenging professional development. Finally, there was some direction in my professional life.

After our first few meetings, I realized that I was not unique or alone. There were other teachers who could empathize with my feelings and understand my students' needs. There were people who could help me. The more our group met, the more I knew that I was surrounded by intelligent, caring, and probing professionals who would force me to articulate my concerns and brainstorm solutions. My professional development through this project has helped demystify ELL students for me. The articles we read in our group gave me a basic knowledge that I needed. The luxury of time to discuss the readings with mainstream, bilingual, and ESL teachers as well as administrators raised my understanding of ELLs to another level. The group meetings brought me into contact with other professionals who were as determined as I was to make our classrooms better for all students.

The first two years with the project gave me enough time and interaction with other teachers to feel safe discussing the successes and failures I had experienced with my students. What I once would have perceived as criticism became helpful observation. A group of teachers sitting together talking about teaching practices became a comfort zone instead of a place to air frustrations. The trust we developed over those first two years was essential to my agreeing to continue with the project.

One of the most important components of my involvement in the project was having a researcher in my classroom twice a month. Having an expert pair of eyes observing, recording, and providing feedback forced me to look carefully and critically at my own classroom practices. With nearly 30 students in a classroom, it is virtually impossible to see and hear everything that is happening. The researcher's observations helped me know which kids were slipping through the cracks, which kids were not contributing in their groups, which kids were uncomfortable clarifying things with someone in their native languages, and which kids were simply not focused because they were in the wrong group. I know that I might have discovered all of those things over time, but I appreciated the feedback and suggestions of someone I completely trusted.

Those discussions with a researcher trained me to become a more critical observer in my own classroom. I am now more able to look at my lessons through the eyes of a trained observer, as well as

through the eyes of my ELL students. It has made an important difference in the way I plan my lessons. I focus more on pre-writing so that my students have more success in meeting the composition standard. When something isn't working, I can better pinpoint why, or I can make a quick phone call to another project teacher, and together we can figure it out. Our discussions even gave me the insight and the courage to make changes based on written feedback from my students. My classroom practices get stronger every day because I have found the knowledge and direction I was so desperately seeking.

The knowledge gained from my whirlwind adventure with the LAB project has helped me dissect the standards bit by bit until I can actually "see" them. The group discussion on examining student work made the need for standards even clearer. It gave us a way to see what our students can do and do well. I no longer feel paralyzed by what my ELL students don't know. I focus on their strengths and use that as my starting point. I look at their writing, and I see progress. I know how to help them now. I also know what to do if I am at an impasse. I am in close contact with other professionals who will share their knowledge and empathize with me. I will never again be alone and struggling.

The project was so valuable that many of us have continued with our own professional reading group. Our first book, *The Skillful Teacher: Building Your Teaching Skills* by Saphier and Gower (1997), has helped us stay focused on our classrooms and continue to look at how classroom practices can support ELL students. We have purposely invited new teachers into this reading group because we know how invaluable it is to have a professional comfort zone. The more teachers we can involve, the better our school district will be. Some of us have taken an additional risk and presented what we have learned to colleagues both inside and outside of the Lowell School District. I am comfortable in this new role because my first-hand experience has convinced me that if professional development is focused and sustained, teachers will become better at what they do, and public schools will once again be respected and valued.

# RESOURCES FOR FURTHER STUDY

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## Internet Sites for Information About English Language Learners

**Center for Applied Linguistics**

http://www.cal.org

This non-profit organization is engaged in the study of language and the application of language research to educational, cultural, and social concerns. It operates several research information centers and clearinghouses, including the ERIC Clearinghouse on Languages and Linguistics (ERIC/CLL), the National Center for ESL Literacy Education (NCLE), the National K-12 Foreign Language Resource Center (NFLRC), and the Cultural Orientation Resources Center. It has managed the ESL Standards and Assessment project for TESOL (http://www.cal.org/public/eslstandards).

**EAC East Resource List**

http://www.gwu.edu/~eaceast/reslist/alter.html

This Web page addresses alternative assessment with English language learners.

**ERIC Clearinghouse on Languages and Linguistics**

http://www.cal.org/ericcll

This ERIC system clearinghouse can be searched for various topics in education reform and English language learners.

**ERIC Clearinghouse on Assessment and Evaluation**

http://ericae.net

This site can be searched by names of tests in the CEEE/ERIC Test Database/Test Locator. An ERIC search on assessment topics such as portfolio assessment and ELLs, or authentic assessment and ELLs, can also be done here.

**Knowledge Loom at the LAB at Brown University**

http://www.knowledgeloom.org

Although this site does not deal directly with English language learners, it focuses on promising professional development programs.

**Massachusetts State Standards**
www.doe.mass.edu

**National Association for Bilingual Education (NABE)**
http://www.nabe.org
This organization focuses on the education of bilingual students.

**National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition and Language Instruction for Education Programs (NCELA), formerly the National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education (NCBE)**
http://www.ncbe.gwu.edu
This site provides a wealth of information, including full-text documents, about the education of language minority students.

**Office of English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement, and Academic Achievement for Limited English Proficient Students (OELA) (U.S. Dept. of Education)**
http://www.ed.gov/offices/OELA

**Office for Civil Rights**
http://www.ed.gov/offices/OCR

**Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages**
http://www.tesol.org
As sponsor of the ESL Standards for pre-K–12 Students, TESOL makes a full-text copy of the ESL Standards (excluding some charts) available. It also describes how to purchase the companion documents for the ESL Standards.

**Teaching Diverse Learners**
www.lab.brown.edu/tdl/
This Web site is dedicated to teachers of culturally and linguistically diverse learners. It provides access to research-based information, helps teachers address the classroom needs of English language learners, and enhances practitioners' capacity to work effectively and equitably with all students.

**The University of Surrey**
http://www.surrey.ac.uk
This is an online resource for articles about language testing and other assessment issues, including portfolios (http://www.surrey.ac.uk/ELI/artlt.html).

# GLOSSARY

**Academic language:** Language used in academic settings to learn academic content. Academic language is generally characterized by technical vocabulary, higher incidence of certain grammatical structures including passive voice verbs, and specialized registers connected to specific fields of study. Academic language is generally learned in school and is frequently contrasted with social language.

**Bilingual program:** A generic term for a variety of program models that use students' native language as the language of instruction. The ratio of native language instruction to English instruction depends on the goals of the particular program model.

**Dominant language:** The language in which a bilingual or multilingual speaker has the greatest proficiency in a given domain of language use (language dominance may vary by domain).

**English language learners** (ELLs): Students who are learning English as an additional language.

**English as a second language** (ESL): The study of English as an additional language.

**Graphic organizer:** Visual representations of information. Graphic organizers can be used to brainstorm, summarize, sequence, or outline information.

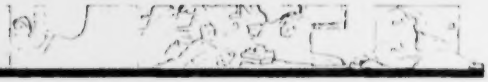
**MCAS:** The Massachusetts Comprehension Assessment System, the statewide standards-based test given to all fourth-, eighth- and tenth-grade students in Massachusetts. Beginning with the class of 2003, passing the MCAS is a graduation requirement.

**Portfolio assessment:** A type of performance assessment that involves collecting multiple types of student performance samples. These purposeful collections of student work allow for the assessment of student progress over time.

**Professional conversations:** Conversations among individuals in a professional field on topics relevant to their work. In professional development settings, teachers and instructors build knowledge through talk. Professional conversations may occur informally.

**Scaffolding instruction:** Providing immediately relevant support to students in order to help them bridge the gap between what they already know and what they are learning.

**Standards:** Broad learning goals defining what students should know and be able to do.



**Study groups:** Small groups that provide sustained opportunities for teachers to explore issues and challenges with direct impact on their professional lives and the lives of their students and to gain new knowledge. Study groups generally consist of 6 to 12 members and meet at least twice a month. Study groups provide a democratic approach to professional development because they promote inquiry and critique.

**Sustainable strategies:** Professional development strategies that, once learned, can be used repeatedly by teachers without an outside facilitator. Examples of sustainable strategies include observing peers' classrooms, analyzing standards, reading and discussing professional literature, and examining student work.

**Thematic units:** Instructional units that integrate concepts and skills from several subject areas. They are especially effective for ELLs because they reinforce concepts and skills that students encounter in various classes. Designing thematic units requires that teachers plan together.

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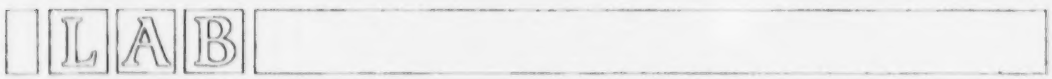

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